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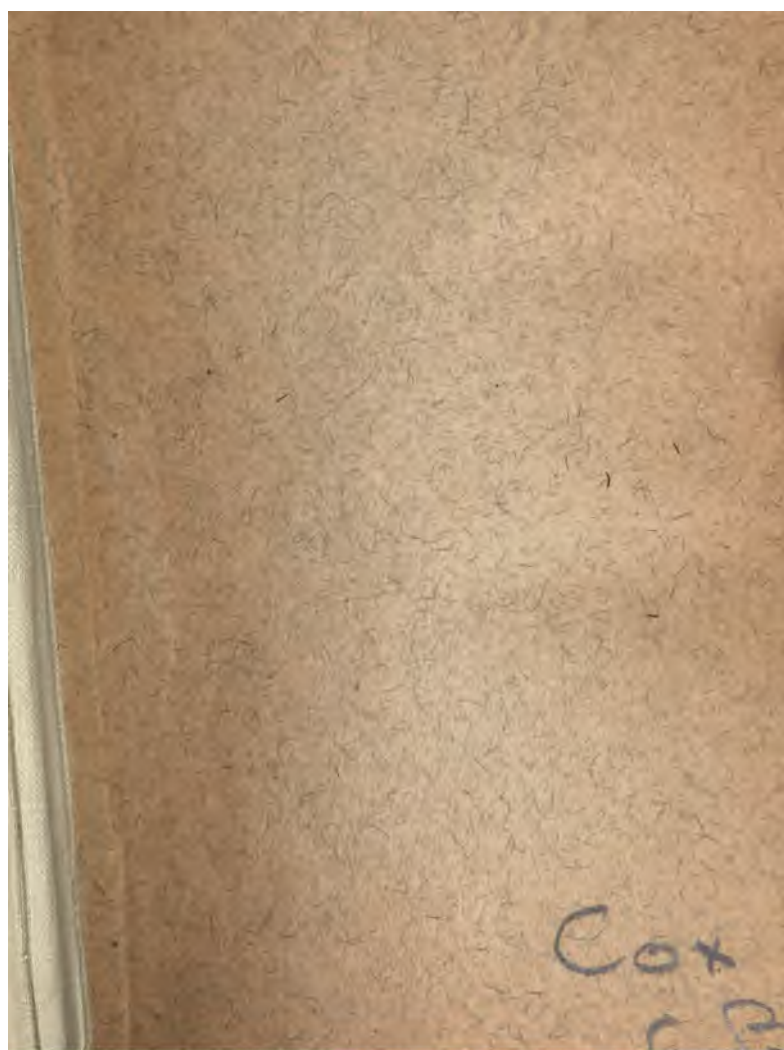
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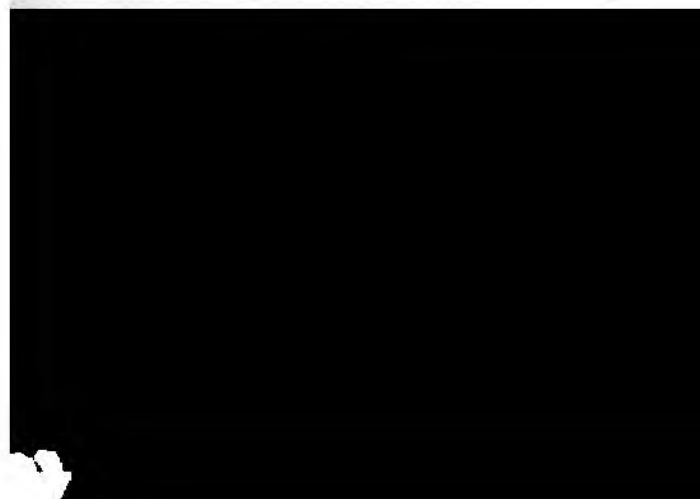
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A CONCISE HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND AND THE ENGLISH
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BY THE

REV. SIR G. W. COX, BART., M.A.,

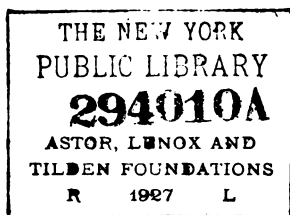
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E 278910



LONDON:
JOSEPH HUGHES,
PILGRIM STREET, LUDGATE HILL, E.C.
1887.



*Morrison and Gibb, Edinburgh,
Printers to Her Majesty's Stationery Office.*



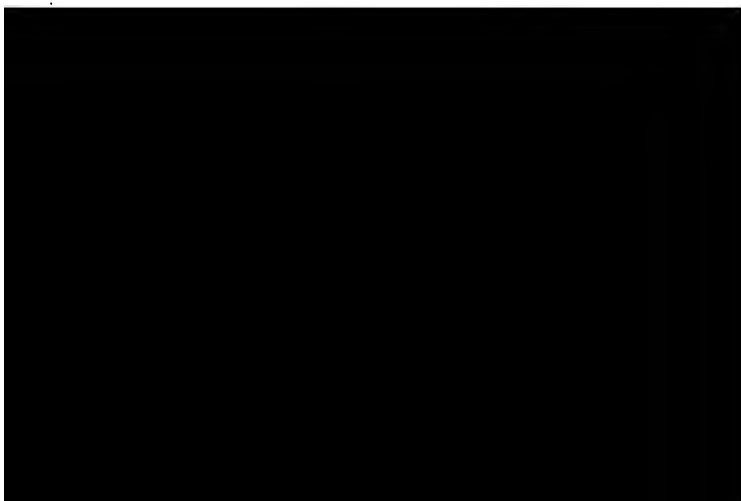
PREFACE.

A HISTORY of England, given in a few hundred pages, must necessarily be a sketch. In the present volume the main purpose has been to make as prominent as possible the personal career of the chief actors in the several parts of the great drama. The work is intended strictly as an introduction to a more continuous study of the subject ; and the matter, it is hoped, has been so put as to awaken and call into action the reader's powers of thought and judgment. Unless these are exercised throughout, the task of reading history is of not the smallest use.

I have, therefore, striven in every case, and more particularly in the chapters which relate to the earlier fortunes of the English people, to show why, or how far, a narrative may or may not be trusted or accepted. From the remarks made on such stories as those of the Massacre of St. Brice, or of the parentage of Thomas of Canterbury, the reader will learn how the various forms of the tale have been produced, and how the value of each may be ascertained. From the stories of Harold's alleged promise to the Norman duke, and of the advice which he is said to have received from his brother Gyrth before the fight at Senlac (Hastings), he will learn that even the

accounts given by opponents are to be carefully considered and weighed. For both these stories we have only Norman authority. But the English writers, who diligently reply to, or refute, a vast mass of Norman misrepresentations or falsehoods, do not contradict their statements in these two cases. Hence we may assume that there is some foundation for them, although they may betray not a little exaggeration.

These chapters may also, it is hoped, exhibit the unity of English history and the continuous and steady political growth of the people from the days of Ælle and Cerdic to our own, and leave the reader fully acquainted with the principles of English constitutional history.



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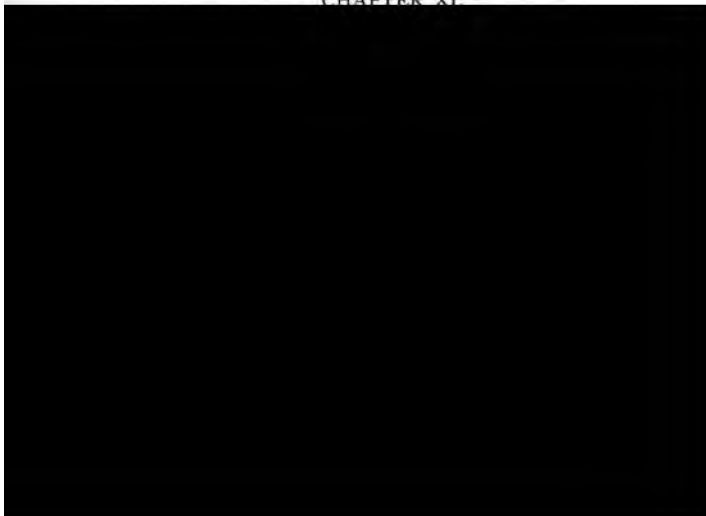
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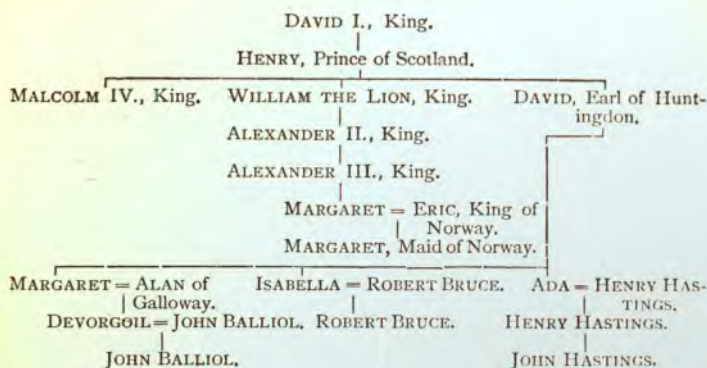
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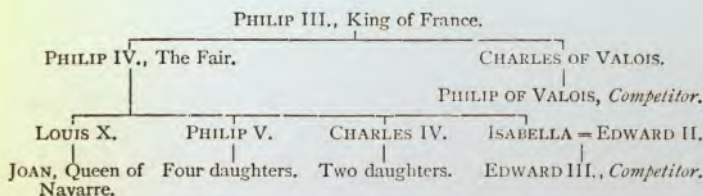
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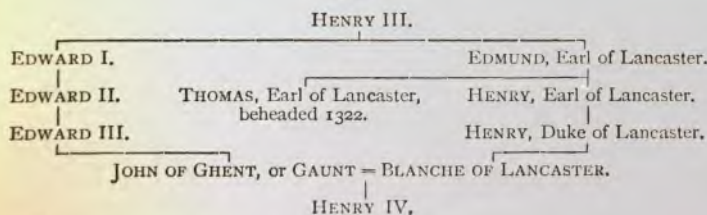
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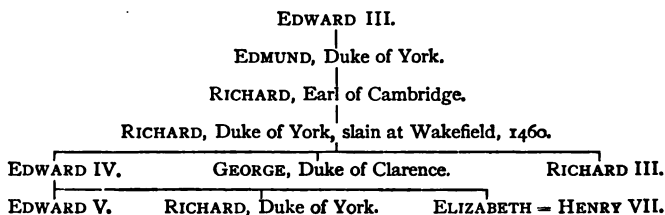


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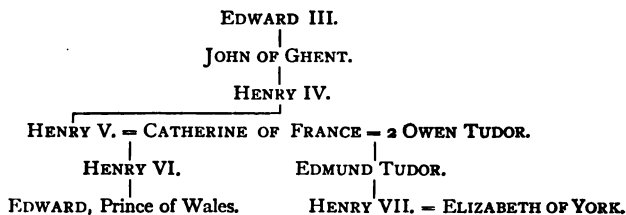


GENEALOGIES.

IV.



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VI.

HENRY VII.

his second invasion, B.C. 54, Cæsar was stoutly opposed by a British chief named Caswallon, or, as the Romans called him, Cassibelaunus, who, although driven to beg for peace, was more fortunate than the Silurian ¹ prince Caradoc (or, in the Latin form, Caractacus), nearly a hundred years later.

**B.C. 54. Second
Invasion of
Julius Cæsar.**

**Defeat of Cas-
wallon (Cassibelaunus).**

Caradoc fell into the hands of his enemies, after a battle where the two streams of the Terne and the Colne meet, near the foot of the Shropshire hill known as Caer-Caradoc. He was carried to Rome, to grace the triumph of the victorious general; but the Emperor Claudius, struck with his bold bearing, not only, it is said, gave him his liberty, but restored to him some portion of his lost dominion.

**A.D. 50. Defeat
of Caradoc
(Caractacus).**

About ten years after the defeat of Caradoc, A.D. 61, the greed and brutal wickedness of Roman officers drove the Icenian princess Boduc (Boadicea) into an insurrection, which was suppressed in torrents of British blood by the Roman prefect Suetonius Paulinus.

**A.D. 61. Revolt
and Defeat of
Boduc (Boadicea).**

The conquest of the island was carried as far as the Firth of Forth, seventeen years later, A.D. 78, by the well-known Cneius Julius Agricola, the father-in-law of the historian Tacitus, who defeated the Caledonians under their chief Gallawg, called by the Romans Galgacus.

**A.D. 78. Con-
quests of
Agricola.**

These events, we must never forget, do not belong to the history of England or of the English. But they serve to show us in what way and how far the Roman power was fixed in the island. The fact of most importance for us to remember, is that under

**State of the
Britons under
Roman Rule.**

¹ By the name Silures the Romans designated the Welsh or British tribe who inhabited the country between the Severn and the Nedd (Swansea Bay).

the Roman rule the Britons became familiar with the forms of Roman civilization. They saw the conquerors constructing great roads from one end of the land to the other. They saw them also build large cities, with beautiful dwelling-houses and baths with courts of justice and temples, with amphitheatres and fortresses; and in the raising of these structures and their adornment they were themselves called upon to take part.

Roman Architecture and Art in Britain.

There is no reason for doubting that in time the Britons became scarcely less skilful than their masters; it is not unlikely that the beautiful work still to be seen in the ruins of the great Roman town of Silchester and elsewhere, came from the hands of Britons trained to carve the graceful capitals of Corinthian and Composite columns.¹ It is, indeed, not so easy for us to realize how much the Romans did in the distant island which had become a province of the empire; but those who have seen the remains of Roman work and of Roman or native art in York, Chester and some other cities will form some



Doncaster, and all the other places whose names end with the word *chester* or *caster*.

They also constructed magnificent roads, some of which are as strong and solid now as when they were laid down. Among the most important of these were the roads known as Watling Street, which extended from Kent to Cardigan Bay; Irmin Street, which connected St. David's with Southampton Water; the Foss-way, which went from Cornwall to Lincoln; and Ikenild Street, which, starting from Tynemouth, was also carried to the place now known as St. David's by way of York, Derby, and Birmingham.

Roman Roads.

They also thought that much might be done to strengthen their dominion by means of walls, which should prevent the incursions of savage tribes beyond the border. Thus the great general Agricola built a wall extending eighty miles, from the Tyne to the Solway Firth, A.D. 79-85. Another wall was carried from the Firth of Forth to that of the Clyde. Of these walls, the former was strengthened by the Emperor Hadrian, A.D. 121, and again nearly a hundred years later by the Emperor Severus, who died at York A.D. 211. The other was repaired by Lollius Urbicus at the beginning of the reign of Antoninus Pius, about A.D. 140. Hence these walls bear respectively the names of the Emperors Hadrian, Severus, and Antoninus.

Roman Walls.

The Britons, on becoming subjects of the empire, were firmly ruled by their masters; but they were not degraded, except in so far as a liking for the luxuries introduced among them may have weakened their ancient vigour. We have, however, no fair grounds for thinking that they were at any time a people capable of offering combined and systematic resistance to a well-disciplined and determined enemy; and

The Britons a
a People.

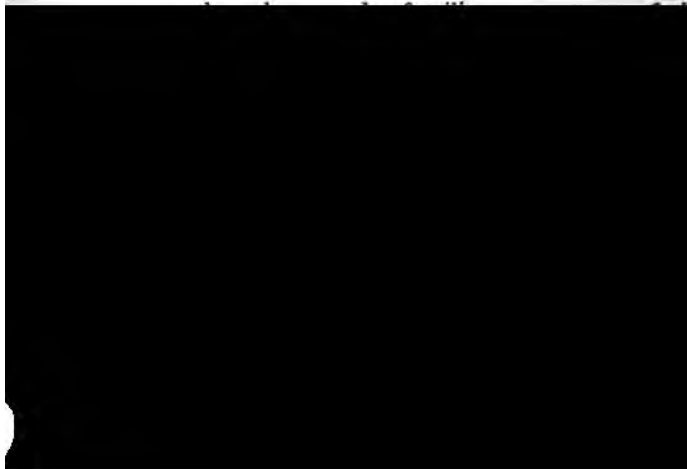
after the departure of the Roman legions it soon became clear that the civilization which they had learnt or borrowed from their masters was for the most part merely on the surface. They ceased, it seemed, to build, or to preserve the buildings which they had raised; they made no additions to the number of their roads and bridges; and, in short, they showed that they were not a people likely to hold their own against men, if such should come, who made robbery and slaughter the business of their lives.

British Christianity.

We must not, however, suppose that on the withdrawal of the Roman legions the Britons became simply what they had been before the eagles of Cæsar were seen upon the shores of Kent. They had, in whatever measure, learnt by experience the advantage of law and order over brute force and anarchy. They had been heathens; they were now Christians, and as such, they had been brought within the great community of European Christendom.

fluence of Roman Language and Religion.

But, from the fact that Britain was an island, the work of imperial Rome was at no time more than half done in it. Her speech was never anything



more nearly akin to Teutons or Germans than to Celts; but they soon found that a more serious danger menaced them from another quarter, and that the Romans had full grounds for the precautions which they had taken on what they called the Saxon Shore.

The German foreigners, who found their way thither, like those over whom the Count of the Saxon Shore had been set to keep watch, were men of stout hearts, sturdy limbs, and vigorous wills; and at first the Britons saw in them excellent soldiers for fighting the battles in which they did not greatly care to risk their own lives. In truth, the new-comers were people of a very different kind from any with whom the Britons had thus far had to deal.

Britons and Germans.

The Romans, so far as they were Romans, belonged to a state which had grown old, which had lost the spirit of earlier times, and which was ruled by a single despot, called the Emperor or Emperor. The Roman empire had almost overspread the world. But it was kept up mainly by armies in which the greater number of the soldiers were not Romans at all; and in this point there was little or no difference between the Roman garrisons in Britain and Roman garrisons elsewhere.

Condition of the Roman Provinces.

These Roman garrisons were not likely therefore to be specially successful as political teachers to the populations over which they kept guard, or to fill them with hearty admiration for the principles of Roman law and government. Still less were they likely to foster in them the spirit which strengthens a people to resist aggression from without, to repress evils within, and to promote the unity which springs from independence of thought and from a willing obedience to law.

Roman Garrisons.

As included in the empire, they were simply the

the Power of
the Empire.

servants of an absolute master far away, and the people among whom they served or to whom they belonged were not nations, but simply provincials, or in other words, subjects of a universal empire under a single despot. So long as they had safety of person and property, what mattered it whether they came of the Gaulish, the Thracian,¹ or any other stock or race? Was not the empire everywhere? Did not its speech go through all lands? So the spell worked; and those who, coming to conquer and slay, attacked the imperial provinces on the mainland of Europe, forgo in a little while their own language, and adopted not only the speech but the religion of those among whom they found themselves.

Character of the
English.

Quite unlike these subjects of a power which wrapped every one in the swaddling-bands of a system which worked much like a machine, the new German rovers who found their way to Britain were a people in the stage of early growth, with many of the worst faults of youth, rash, headstrong, quarrelsome, greedy, violent, and cruel. Absolutely without fear, they

But there was a brighter side to the picture. These merciless plunderers and slayers of their enemies—that is, of all who did not belong to their own people—had also a belief in the necessity of order and law, out of which great things were to spring. They knew nothing of the despotism of one man ruling his subjects according to his own fancy. They had their chiefs, and these chiefs were intrusted with great power; but everything lay in the fact that this power was a trust, and that this trust was to be exercised for the good of the people, who themselves took part in the work of government.

English Law.

The chiefs were the leaders of freemen who had full right of speech in the common assembly, and who, if they did wrong, must be punished, not by the mere will of one man, but only after trial before their peers or equals. Above all, they were men who believed that order and law begin in each man's house, that there is something sacred in the relations of parents and children, of husbands and wives, of brothers and sisters, and that the vices which do violence to these relations are beyond any others to be hated and put down. They were, in short, men who believed that none could be properly governed unless they helped to govern themselves, and that no people could be really powerful unless they were free, paying a willing obedience to laws which they themselves had made.

English Families.

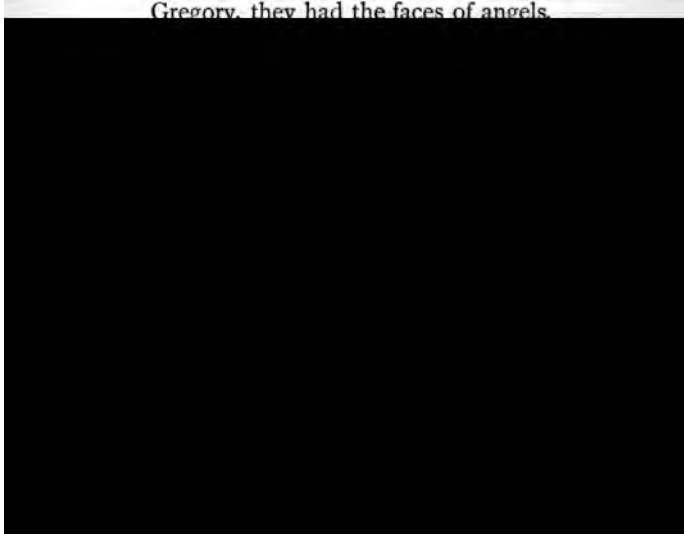
All these good qualities gave them a great advantage over people who, like the Romans, had given themselves up to the most debasing vices, and had cast to the winds all thought of duty, or of any obedience except to constraining force; or who, like the Britons, could not stand together against a common enemy, and seemed not to know that a number of weak

Natural Advantages of the English.

English, Saxons, Jutes, or Goths, carried English Saxony, Juteland, and Gothland, with them where they might go. The Greek, when he went forth from his metropolis or mother-city, took his home with him, and his home remained a portion of Hellas (Greece) as much as the lands of the kinsfolk from whom he was parted. The Great Hellas, or Great Greece (*Magna Græcia*, as the Latins called it), was indeed, not in the region which lay between the Olympian heights and the cliffs of Malea, but in the Italian soil; and in the same way the English went forth from the banks of the Elbe to win for themselves and to establish a mightier England in the great island of the western sea.

Origin of the
Name English.

Beyond the country which they left, and which for us the older England, we are unable to trace their fortunes; nor can we even venture to say with assurance how they got their name. Most certain it was not because either there or elsewhere they lived in an angle or nook, or because, according to Pausanias, they had the faces of angels.



life imparted to it by the laws, the arts, the manners, the discipline of the sovereign people who, starting from the seven hills on the banks of the Tiber, had made themselves masters of the world. Their empire, and the society which grew up with it, showed themselves possessed of a magic charm. Barbarians, and even savages, might assail it; but, if they were not driven back, they were slowly but surely absorbed into its mighty mass, forgetting in great part their language, their laws, and their religion, and adopting those of the people whom they conquered.

Thus the Franks, over whom Charles the Great was king, A.D. 768-804, the Northmen who followed Hrolf (Rollo, 885-912) to the banks of the Seine, or who fought their way into Apulia or Sicily under the Guiscards, 1050-1100, were as much Teutonic as we are; but they could not withstand the spell of Roman civilization. All learnt to speak what are called Romance languages, and in some lands they gradually disappeared altogether in the mass of the conquered population.

The Franks and
the North-
men.

A wholly different lot awaited them in the great island which lay not very many miles to the west of the lowlands of the Elbe. Here Roman law and civilization had not struck their roots deep into the heart of the people, and the polish on the surface was soon rubbed off. Just because it was an island, Britain had never become a part of the empire in the sense in which Gaul and Spain became parts of it; and, just because the English and their kinsfolk came from regions which the Roman emperors had been unable to reach, their settlement in Britain had results wholly different from those which followed the inroads of Hlodwig (Clovis) (480-510) into the plains of Gaul.

Britain and the
Roman Em-
pire.

Comparative
Weakness of
the Empire in
Britain.

From lands where the dominion of Rome was thoroughly established, and between which there were no geographical barriers, the speech and civilization of Rome have never been dislodged. Invader after invader may have crossed the borders of the empire, but all have yielded to the spell. It was so with every people from the Mediterranean gates to the banks of the Rhine; and so would have been with those of the Elbe and the Oder, had the Roman legions under Varus been smitten down in the Teutoburg wood by the battleaxes of Arminius (Arminius) and his countrymen, A.D. 9. If the legions had won a victory as decisive as their defeat, our forefathers would have become Roman provinces (page 14) after the fashion of Gauls and Spaniards, and the world would have known nothing of the existence of the English in Britain, or of the still mightier England which has sprung into existence and is spreading far and wide in America and Australia.

Teutonic In-roads.

The half-Romanized Britons would have found a hard task probably to withstand their north-



possible, in no very rough guise, and may have been found useful as soldiers by British chiefs. There is, therefore, nothing in itself incredible in the story which relates the fortunes of Vortigern and the maiden to whom is given the imaginary name of Rowena.

The tale is soon told. Rowena, it is said, was the daughter of Hengist and niece of Horsa, chieftains sprung from Woden, the god of the blue heaven. In the great house which her father built in Thanet, her beauty kindled the love of the British prince Vortigern, before whom she appeared as cup-bearer, and who made her his wife, endowing her father with a wide and rich domain. But Vortigern's son Vortemar had no feelings of fondness for the foreigner, whom he drove clean out of the land. During the rest of Vortemar's life Hengist and his followers were homeless; but on his death Hengist came back to claim the lands which had been bestowed upon him. A council was summoned; but the Saxon chief bade his people come armed, and to slay the Britons when he should cry out, "Nemeth yure seaxe" (Draw your daggers). All fell except Vortigern, who added to the lands of Hengist, and so made him the chief of a powerful people.

The Story
Vortigern and
Rowena.

The story does not hang very well together; but, as it would serve to show that the strangers came first as friends, and that their settlement here was the result of peaceful treaties, it would naturally obtain belief among those over whose cowardice it would throw a veil. Its worthlessness is shown by the fact that it is not found in the earliest records on either side. These earlier records (and that of Gildas is not greatly more recent than the time of which it speaks) tell us only of thorough and systematic conquest *mercilessly carried out*—a conquest which either

Character and
Value of the
Story.

destroyed the old inhabitants or drove them westward until they reached the fastnesses of the Welsh hills; that is, the hills of the Wealas or foreigners, for the Welsh no more call themselves Welsh than the Germans call themselves Germans.

abjugation of
the British
Tribes.

But it is impossible to slay a whole people; and the women become in a body the wives of the conquerors, the children are as likely to avenge the wrongs of their mothers as to extend the dominion of their fathers. The very small number of Welsh words in the English vocabulary even for objects of domestic use, is better proof that the invaders brought the women with them, than is the mention of Rowena dwelling in the halls of her father Hengist.

Angles and
Saxons.

Thus the land of Britain became the home of people belonging to several Teutonic tribes, who, soon as they began to speak of themselves collectively called themselves Englishmen. In different parts of the land there were settlements of Jutes, of Saxons, and of Angles; and, to show his nearest kindred man might call himself a Saxon or a Jute, while in contrast with the British or Celtic tribes all we



CHAPTER IV.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ENGLISH IN BRITAIN.

IN this sweeping fashion was the Teutonic conquest of Britain carried out. How far it affected the general appearance of the country we cannot say. Even before their final inroads, the great Roman works were, in all likelihood, falling into decay; and it is certain that the destruction of some of the Roman towns was the result of the struggle. The walls of Anderida still remain to attest the craft of the Roman builders; but within the walls every building was swept away, and the neighbouring West Ham and Pevensey, the "island" of a chief named "Peofn" (Peven), became the abodes of the invaders, who refused to dwell within the circle of the old defences.

Destruction of
Roman Towns.

The English in their new, as in their old, home were no lovers of cities. The mark (or ground-plot) of each freeman was as dear to him here as it had been in Elbe or Oder land; and the desire awakened in him by the sight of great cities was rather to destroy than to preserve.

The English
Mark.

But the work of the strangers was not done in a day or in a year. The old chronicle tells us of battles fought by Ælle and his sons, who founded the kingdom of the South Saxons (Sussex), A.D. 491, by Cerdic, who, 519, became chief of the West Saxons (Wessex), having slain Natanleod¹ and five thousand

Foundation of
the Kingdoms
of the South
Saxons and of
Wessex.

¹ This leader is probably the same as Ambrosius Aurelius, a chieftain of Roman descent, and perhaps one of the British provincial emperors. The name Natanleod denotes "Prince of the Sanctuary," the sanctuary being probably the church of Amesbury.

Britons on the banks of the Avon. The records of the struggle are meagre enough ; but their very scarcity is decisive proof of the vast differences of condition under which the English conquest of Britain was achieved, as contrasted with Teutonic inroads in Roman provinces on the mainland of Europe. The latter involved no uprooting of civilization, of religion and of law, for the invaders themselves had, even before they left their homes, felt the influence of imperial Rome, and were fully conscious of their own inferiority in many ways.

Conditions of
the English
Conquest of
Britain.

These provinces of the mainland were, moreover, integral portions of the empire at the time when the barbarians burst into them. Britain had been considered as a dangerous or a worthless possession ; and when Britain was invaded by men who had never come directly under Roman influence, and probably knew nothing more of the empire than what they may have learnt from the traditions relating to the exploits of the victory of Irmin (A.D. 9, see page 20). Elsewhere the speech of Cæsar had become the speech of

little or no interference with the working of the Christian Church, or with the authority of its clergy ; in Britain the extermination of the inhabitants involved the uprooting of Christianity, and the fierce heathenism of the invaders had full swing for a century and a half, before Augustine and his companions committed themselves to the task of conquering it.

The incoming of the German invaders thus involved in Britain a complete severance between the old state of things and the new ; and the issue was the establishment of a number of Teutonic kingdoms, or rather principalities, said sometimes to have been seven, and therefore called the Heptarchy. But in truth it is almost impossible to trace the changes through which some at least of these kingdoms passed, or the manner in which they rose and fell ; and it would be only partially true to say that these kingdoms survive in our counties.

The Heptarchy.

They may do so in some cases ; but in Kent it has been remarked that the two sees of Canterbury and Rochester bear witness to the existence of two distinct kingdoms within the present shire, while the Chronicle speaks of no less than five kings of the West Saxons as slain in a single battle by the Northumbrian chief Edwin in the year 626. Of the origin of the kingdom of Mercia, the march, or border, land, on the Welsh side, we know nothing ; but we find it a powerful state at the end of the sixth century.

Shires and Kingdoms.

That this multitude of petty kingdoms should remain long isolated or distinct was in the nature of things impossible. There was necessarily a constant tendency towards the absorption of the smaller principalities in the dominions of the more vigorous and successful chieftains ; and the disappearance of

Absorption of petty Kingdoms.

the kingdom in no way affected the life or the condition of its people.

**English Land
Tenure.**

This condition was strictly one of growth upwards. Its foundations were laid in the *mark*, which assigned the holding of land to families in parcels, the arable land passing at definite intervals from one man to another, and the pasture or waste land being held in common by the whole body. These parcels together formed a township; and after the conversion of the people to Christianity, the township in its ecclesiastical aspect became a parish. The township or parish had its head man and its meetings for the management of its own concerns; and the same system was applied to the union of townships in a hundred, and of hundreds in a shire.

**Lack of Na-
tional Feeling.**

The whole people were being educated, therefore, (slowly, it may be, and rudely, but surely,) in the school of self-government; and hence it made little difference whether the chiefs of the shire-mote regarded as their master the king of the West or the



In their home on the mainland, the English had lived under Ealdormen (aldermen or elders) and heretogas, or dukes, not under kings; and it was by chiefs so-called that the conquest of Britain was achieved. But within a generation some of these chiefs are found to have attained the dignity of kingship; and some, again, acquired, by whatever means, a certain authority or supremacy over the princes of the inferior states.

Of these kings eight are named in the Chronicle as having been invested with the title of Bretwalda. The origin and meaning of the name are matters of dispute. That it had nothing to do with any scheme for keeping up the idea of an empire of the west, we may be sure; that the dignity was conferred by election, we may very fairly assume. But whatever be the points which we must leave undetermined, the fact that among the several kings or chiefs some attained to pre-eminence, and established their power on a solid basis, remains unaffected.

The history of these kingdoms, intricate and obscure though it may be, is full of interest and value for those who are really anxious to know how the constitution, the laws, and the life of Englishmen have been shaped. But it is also a history which, it must be confessed, has its repulsive side, exhibiting a vast amount of brutality and a very small amount of fair and kindly dealing. It is disfigured by a disunion and an incapacity for joint action which become at times disgraceful, and by a treachery which is often horrifying. We might, therefore, be forgiven if we should feel the temptation to dismiss the quarrels and the wars of such men as the battles of kites and crows. But, although it would be unwise to do this, it is most necessary to *bear in mind* the real character

The Bretwalda.

Repulsive side of Early-English History.

of English history before the Norman conquest ; and we must not hesitate, therefore, to point it out with the utmost clearness before we go further.

**Vacillation and
Weakness of
Will.**

Throughout the whole of this time we are struck by the singular weakness, or rather absence, of the feeling now often described by the name of nationality; and this instability, or want of fixed character, in the people is reflected with scarcely a single exception in their leaders. If we are to take the story as it stands, it would be hard indeed to find one in whom weakness and vacillation of will failed to work dire mischief at some critical moment.

**Frequent
Changes
Masters.**

of

There is, however, little in this which should excite either surprise or wonder. The whole story, from the first Teutonic invasion of the country to the victory of the Norman Duke at Senlac, brings before us a series of fierce struggles with short intervals of precarious rest. From almost all of these conflicts some new man comes forth as the master. Change of lords became at length so frequent that the people submitted to it almost as a matter of course.

**Solidity of Teu-
tonic Con-
quests.**

But if the signs of weakness are seen everywhere, the tokens of coming greatness are not wanting ; and the main fact to be noted and remembered is this,

These heathen tribes thought very much of their own freedom, but they thought nothing of the freedom of others. If we are to believe the English Chronicle (which upsets many a fiction or fancy of later times), the Britons had fought for their land not altogether ingloriously; and the bravery of Natanleod (page 23), who fell on the field of battle at Charford in 508, may stand in the place of the valour of king Arthur, whose twelve victories reflect only the twelve successful labours of Heracles (Hercules).

The name of Arthur brings before us the wonderful romance which repeats the story told in almost every epic poem of the Aryan world. But it is useless to look for grains of historical fact in the career of the prince who wields the sword brought to him by the fairy queen, and who only slumbers in Avallon,¹ awaiting, like Olger the Dane, the moment when he is to reappear in his ancient strength and majesty. We have, indeed, no reason or even excuse for accepting the stories of exploits or incidents which are unknown to those who have left us the earliest records of the time; and even the English Chronicle, invaluable though it be, cannot be trusted everywhere in its chronology.

But although Arthur fades into the mists of cloud-land with William of Cloudeslee in the old English ballad, with William Tell, and many more, the fact that the Britons were not conquered at a stroke, and that they were not even always defeated, still remains. The Teutonic invaders seem to have started in their work of conquest with frantic rage; but the first fury of onset soon yielded to the sobering thoughts of

Exploits of
Arthur.

Origin of Eng-
lish Serfdom.

¹ This is supposed to be the same place as Glastonbury, where the body of Arthur is said to have been discovered in the time of Henry II.

their personal interest. The destruction of all buildings would only leave them houseless ; the wholesale slaughter of the inhabitants would only deprive them of servants whose toil might bring them wealth. The buildings were spared, and the people were kept alive, but they were reserved for the doom of slavery. Their children became hereditary bondmen. The dragon's teeth were sown ; and from this horrid seed sprang, it would seem, the great curse of serfdom, which lay as a deadly incubus on the land for many a weary age.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CONVERSION OF THE ENGLISH.

Contrast between Britain and other Roman Provinces.

THE influence which might have deprived the evil of its sting was for the time crushed. The captives and the bondmen were Christians ; but the fierce conquerors utterly untouched by the leaven of Roman

banished with those who professed it. The need of converting the conquerors is of itself conclusive proof that they are not the same people with the multitudes whom they slaughtered or drove out as Welshmen.

As the years went on, the darkness of heathenism settled down in thicker gloom over the land, and the Britons, if we are to believe the story, took no trouble to dispel it. It may be true to say that greater zeal might have been more saint-like; and by way of excuse it might, on the other hand, be pleaded that heroic self-devotion is, to say the least, not common. But the true explanation is to be found in the fact that Christianity in any shape or form had no existence within the borders of any of the earliest Teutonic principalities. Free British Christians would be debarred from crossing those borders, and the influence exercised by bondmen and slaves is seldom large. For the English heathen the deliverance was to come not from tribes which they had dispossessed, but from the Eternal City, where the Pope was practically taking the place of the Emperor.

The fire which was to burst out into healing light for England was kindled, it is said, in the heart of the priest Gregory, when in the slave-market of Rome he beheld some children, fair-haired, bright-eyed, and graceful in form, waiting to be sold. On his asking whence they came, he was told that they had been brought from Britain. Asking, further, what their religion might be, he learnt that they were heathens, and he expressed his sorrow that creatures so lovely should be the prey of the prince of darkness. "But to what race do they belong?" asked the priest. "They are of the race of the Angles," was the answer. "Well are they so called," he replied, "for they are meet to become angels of God, and by God's grace

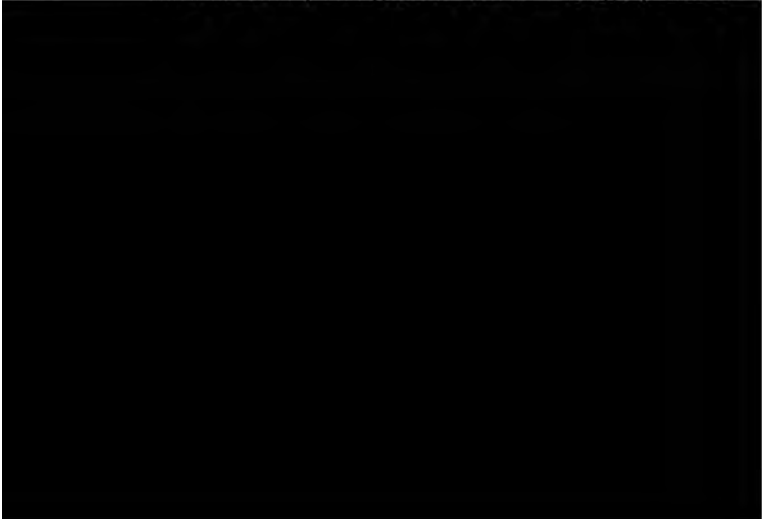
The Spread of
Heathenism.

Story of Greg-
ory the Great
and the En-
glish Children
in the Roman
Slave-Market.

they shall become such. But if they are Angles by birth, from what region do they come?" "From the kingdom of Deira," was the answer. Gregory was now fairly started on the series of puns which gave expression to his feelings of pity and love. "This is well," he cried, "for they shall be delivered *De ira Dei* (from the wrath of God), and shall be made His dear children. And how name you the king of this land?" "He is called Ælle," they said; and Gregory wound up his catechism with the fervent words, "Well again, for the prophecy of this name also shall be fulfilled, and the sound of Alleluia shall be heard in every portion of his realm."

Election of
Gregory to
the Papacy.

Eager to set out at once on his errand of mercy, Gregory, then a simple priest, hurried to the Pope, wrung from him a reluctant consent to the enterprise, and forthwith took his departure. He had journeyed for three days, when he was stopped by the Pope's messengers. The population of Rome had been almost roused to rebellion by grief for his loss, and he was straitly charged to return. Gregory was a



out with praiseworthy promptitude. As their distance from Rome became greater, the dangers of their pilgrimage assumed more formidable proportions, and a few days saw them again at the feet of Gregory the Great. To their prayer that he would release them from this work, Gregory replied simply that to look back after putting hand to the plough was sin; that he would rejoice to go forth with them, if he could; but that, as he could not, he would give them letters to divers princes and great men, which might help to make their path more easy.

Augustine and his companions were no cowards. Their hearts had failed them only for a moment, and henceforth they knew no fear. Hastening on as speedily as they could, they soon found themselves in the Kentish land, of which Æthelberht (A.D. 560-616), the third Bretwalda, was the king. Like his countrymen, Æthelberht was a heathen; but he could scarcely be without some knowledge of Christianity, which was professed by his wife Bertha, daughter of Charibert, king of Paris, even if we leave out of sight the British bondmen who might be found in his dominions.

On the tidings that forty strangers, who had reached the Isle of Thanet, wished to talk with him on the subject of religion, Æthelberht sent to say that he was ready to hear what they might have to tell him. But dread of magic, we are told, determined him to receive them not under his roof, but under an oak tree. Here, with a silver cross borne before him and a banner bearing the likeness of the Redeemer, Augustine approached him and delivered the message with which he was charged. The answer of Æthelberht was simple, reasonable, and generous. He could not, he said, *abandon on a sudden his own*

Reign of
Æthelberht
of Kent, A.D.
560-616.

Reception of
Augustine
and his Com-
panions by
Æthelberht.

religion for another with which he was unacquaint but, as the purpose of the strangers was cle a kind one, they should not only be free to sp wherever they pleased and to make all the conv whom they could gain, but they should also maintained at his cost.

**Entry of Augus-
tine into
Canterbury.**

Full of gladness, the monks resumed their jour to Canterbury, which they entered chanting prayer, "We beseech Thee, O Lord, in Thy me turn Thy anger and wrath from this city and fi Thy holy house, for we are sinners. Alleluia." with this word of glad thanksgiving was fulfilled promise of Ælla's name, which fell from the lips Gregory in the slave-market at Rome.

**Life of Bæda
(Venerable
Bede)**

This beautiful tale is related by Bæda, a perfe honest historian, so far as his lights carried h Bæda, commonly known as the Venerable Bæ spent his whole life in the monastery of Jarrow, wh he died, A.D. 735, at the age of sixty-three. He c piled a history of the country from the earliest ti

great work was undertaken at the bidding of the Pope, and that the man to whom it was intrusted became the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

CHAPTER VII.

AUGUSTINE AND THE BRITISH BISHOPS.

AUGUSTINE had not to wait long before Æthelberht, seeing the impression made on his subjects by the new teachers, professed himself a Christian. His baptism, A.D. 597, was speedily followed by the simultaneous submission of ten thousand of his subjects.

A D. 597. Baptism of Æthelberht.

But the charity of Augustine was not confined, we are told, to the rescuing of the English alone from the darkness of heathenism. This portion of his task he was doing, indeed, with great judiciousness. There was no expression of contempt or indignation on the part of the missionaries for the system which they avowed themselves determined to put down. The heathen temple became in each place, on the conversion of the inhabitants, the Christian church; and they were allowed to keep up all festal usages which were in themselves harmless. The questions put by Augustine to the Pope may show that he might have made serious mistakes, if left to himself; but from Gregory they drew forth answers which well deserve the attention of missionaries of any age. As the work went on, Augustine was directed to consecrate bishops for Rochester and London, while he was also invested with jurisdiction over all the bishops in Britain.

Gregory and Augustine.

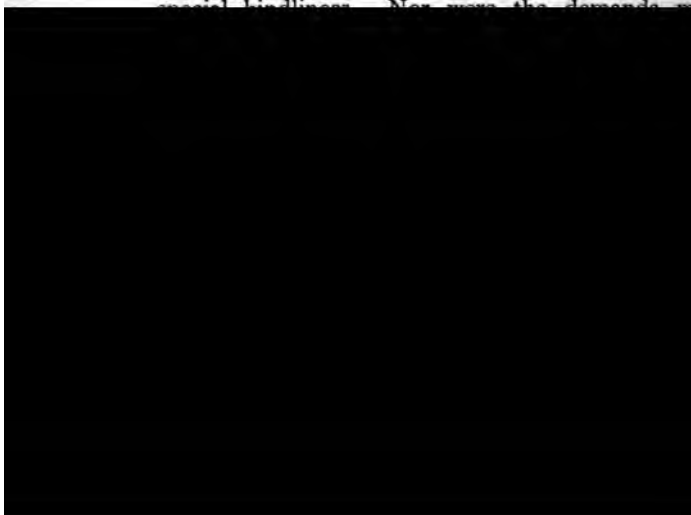
**Metropolitan
Authority of
Augustine.**

This act implied, of course, that the Roman bishop had authority over all Christian bishops, when they might be found, for the consent of the British bishops and clergy was not asked to the decree which Gregory made Augustine metropolitan of England, and by which he partitioned the whole country into two provinces, each with twelve bishops. But this assumption of authority was becoming constantly more necessary, if the claims urged by the Popes were to be maintained. The unity of the Church, it was asserted, was a visible unity under a visible head; and the Pope insisted that this visible head could be no other than himself, as the Vicegerent of Jesus Christ and the successor of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles.

**The British
Bishops.**

These claims the British bishops were not disposed to admit. They were urged by a man who was now a bishop over English Christians; and the Britons had not yet brought themselves to look on their conquerors, even if converted, with feelings

special kindness. Nor were the demands



miracle showed him to be a man of God, declined to allow that on this account they were bound to admit his jurisdiction.

A second meeting was arranged, to be held at a place known afterwards as Augustine's Oak, in Worcestershire. But before they attended it the British bishops took counsel with a holy hermit, who advised them to be guided by a moral test, and to follow Augustine, if he were a man of God. When they asked how they were to ascertain this, the hermit replied that all servants of God were meek and lowly, and that if Augustine showed himself haughty and ungentle they might safely reject his claims. This answer still left them perplexed; but on being questioned again the hermit told them that they might settle the matter by allowing Augustine to reach the place of meeting first. If he should rise on their coming, they might regard him as meek and humble; if he should remain sitting, they would have sufficient proof of his arrogance. Augustine un- luckily did not rise at their approach; and when the British bishops bluntly refused to acknowledge his jurisdiction, he burst, it is said, into loud expressions of indignation at their want of Christian love in making no efforts to convert the English, and warned them that their neglect of duty would assuredly bring down on them the vengeance of God.

A few years later, A.D. 607, so the story runs, the English attacked the Britons at Chester, Caerleon, the city of the legions. The monks of the neighbouring monastery of Bangor stood by to aid their countrymen by their prayers. On learning the reason of their presence, the English king declared that prayers might be a more potent weapon against him than spears, and ordered *his soldiers, before they attacked*

Conference at
Augustine's
Oak.

A.D. 607. Mas-
sacre of the
Monks of
Bangor
Caerleon.

princes of the time, Edwin, son of Ælla, the founder of the kingdom of Deira, the land to the north of Humber, could look back upon marvellous experience of danger and disaster. On his father's death, A.D. 588, his throne had been seized by Æthelfrith, the slaughterer of the Bangor monks at Caerleon. The tragedy there brought about was caused, it seems, the refusal of the chief of North Wales to surrender the young Edwin, who on the defeat of his friend was compelled to seek a refuge elsewhere.

Edwin and
Redwald.

For a time he was sheltered by Redwald, king of East Anglia; but the bribes of Æthelfrith shook Redwald's faith, and a friend, warning Edwin of the danger of treachery, bade him fly. Worn out with anxiety, Edwin refused to stir, and, being left alone, sat brooding over his sorrows, until at the dead of night he heard a voice asking him why he alone remained awake. When he replied that his mode of spending the night could concern no one but himself, the stranger, telling him that he knew the cause of his grief, asked him what he would give to be assured

Æthelfrith on the field of Retford, A.D. 617. Æthelfrith was slain; but there too fell the son of Redwald, and Edwin became his successor. As his wife he chose a daughter of Æthelberht, king of Kent, who at first objected to the marriage on the ground that Edwin was a heathen. He yielded at length on Edwin's assurance that she should be allowed the free exercise of her religion; and the bride of the East Anglian king appeared before him under the guardianship of Paulinus, who had been consecrated as first bishop of the arch-diocese of York.

With Edwin himself Paulinus could achieve nothing. His life was attempted in his house at Aldby, near Stamford Bridge, by an assassin, sent, it is said, by the king of Wessex; but the blow of the dagger, which was thought to be poisoned, was diverted by the son of one of his thanes, who sacrificed himself for his master's safety. The birth of his first child followed on the next day; but his joy at this event could draw from him nothing more than a promise that he would renounce his idols if he should be victorious over the chief who had employed a murderer to do his will. The victory was gained; but Edwin still remained obdurate, until, as the story goes, Paulinus one day approached him, and solemnly laying his hand upon his head, bade him remember the warning of the vision.

The tale implies that the knowledge of this vision had been divinely imparted to Paulinus; but this is not the only point on which the traditions relating to Edwin tremble on the very verge of romance. All that can be said is that in some way or other Edwin's resistance was overcome; and a great council was summoned to decide the question of the national religion.

Edwin and Paulinus.

Story of the Conversion of Edwin to Christianity.

**The Chief Priest
Coifi.**

In this assemblage, the first speaker, we are told was the chief priest Coifi, who declared that the new teaching should at least be carefully considered inasmuch as it was abundantly evident that the old religion possessed no virtue whatever. Had it been worth anything, the favours of the gods would have been showered down lavishly on himself, their most devoted worshipper, whereas the portion which had fallen to his lot was scant indeed. If the new doctrines should appear more efficacious, they should, he urged, be adopted without further debate.

**The Mystery of
Human Life.**

The second speaker, it is said, compared the life of man to the flight of a bird across a lighted hall in winter time. It came out of darkness; it was cheered for the moment by the light of the blazing fire; and then it vanished into darkness again. If the new teaching could throw any light on this abyss of mystery, it must be better than a religion which had nothing to say about it.

**The Confession
of Coifi.**

Paulinus was now called on to set forth the new faith: and having heard him to the end, Coifi



and with a horse, which he was forbidden to mount. The folk stared as at a madman, while the priest, spear in hand, rode towards the temple, and there hurled his lance into the idol. No harm followed, and Coifi, less tolerant than Pope Gregory, ordered the temple with its contents to be consumed by fire. So ended the worship of the old deities at Godmund-ingham, now known as Goodmanham, on the banks of the Derwent, in the wapentake ¹ of Harthill.

CHAPTER IX.

ECCLESIASTICAL CONTROVERSIES OF THE SEVENTH CENTURY.

THE fabric raised by Paulinus was, like that of Augustine, doomed to fall for a time. Edwin, great and prosperous, incurred the hatred of the heathen Penda, the Mercian king, who entered into an alliance with the Christian Ceadwalla, the British chief of Gwyneth, or North Wales. Fighting with these princes, he fell (A.D. 633) in the great battle of Hatfield Chase, near Doncaster; and the two Northumbrian kings, to show that they had nothing to do with him, abjured Christianity.

Battle of Hat-
field Chase,
A.D. 633.

Both these chiefs were slain fighting, and their successor Oswald, who again set up the cross, fell in battle, at Maserfield, A.D. 642, against the Mercian Penda, leaving behind him the memory of a saint and martyr. More wars and more slaughterings followed, until Penda in his turn was slain in the

Battle of Maser-
field. A.D.
642.

¹ The territorial division of the wapentake is still retained in Yorkshire. It stands in the *place* of the division into hundreds.

great fight of Winwedfield on the banks of the Ais near Leeds, A.D. 655. His conqueror, Oswio, now became the most powerful prince in the island, and Christianity worked its way slowly amongst his subjects.

Progress of
Christianity.

Its progress was broken by controversies on matters of mere discipline, which were treated as if they were vital truths. The Scottish or British party and the Roman party appealed each to the authority of great and saintly names.

Synod of Whit-
by. A.D. 664.

At the Synod of Whitby, A.D. 664, Wilfrid, afterwards archbishop of York, asked whether his opponent Colman would dare to oppose the authority of Columba to that of St. Peter, to whom were intrusted the keys of heaven. Here the king turned sharply on Colman, and asked him whether he allowed that St. Peter held the keys of the heavenly kingdom. "Beyond doubt," was the answer. "Then," replied the king, "I shall hold to Peter, lest, when I open myself at the gates of heaven, he should shut them against me;" and so the debate was ended.

these fragments exhibited a beauty and a majesty of which in their own land they could never have even dreamed.

It was no wonder, then, that they who knelt to receive the blessing of the successor of St. Peter should feel for him a loyalty ready to face all perils in his service; and among the most loyal and devoted of these was Wilfrid, bishop first of Lindisfarne, now called Holy Island, and afterwards of York.

Life of Wilfrid,
Bishop of
Lindisfarne
and of York.

Wilfrid's life was one of strange changes. Having gone to Compiègne to receive consecration, he remained in Gaul three years. On his return he narrowly escaped with his life in a fierce struggle with the merciless wreckers of the Sussex coast, and, finding his see filled by the Scottish monk Ceadda (Chad), withdrew quietly to his monastery at Ripon. Here he built a church, which left on the minds of the English an impression of surpassing grandeur, while his friend Benedict Biscop was enriching his church at Wearmouth with books and paintings, the most precious which could be obtained in Rome.

Wilfrid at
Ripon.

The controversies of these early ages were confined virtually to questions of authority and jurisdiction. Wilfrid's great quarrel was to be not with Scottish monks or priests, but with the Greek Theodore of Tarsus, the Archbishop of Canterbury, against whose division of the see of York he protested. Appealing to the Pope, he departed. A storm cast his ship on the coast of Friesland, where he remained a year, toiling unweariedly for the conversion of a people who had tarried in the old home of the English. Finding his way at length to Rome, he obtained from the Pope a decree reinstating him in his bishopric; but he went back only to be shut up in a prison.


Theodore,
Archbishop of
Canterbury.

Set free at length, he found a refuge in Sussex,

among the people who had all but taken his life when the storm threw him on their coast years ago ; and in their conversion he found the noblest revenge. On his deathbed the Archbishop Theodore, whom a singular fortune had brought from the birthplace of St. Paul to the gloomier land of the English, expressed his sorrow for the wrong done to Wilfrid, who, he now said, had been unjustly deposed. Wilfrid's restoration broke only for a moment the long series of disputes in which his whole life was to be entangled. It is a strange spectacle of disquietude and unrest ; but never perhaps was there a man of whom it might with greater truth be said that the evil which he had done died with him, while the good lived on.

Wilfrid as a
Missionary.

Wherever he had worked, Wilfrid's success as a missionary was marvellous ; and, much as we may be repelled by the gross and sometimes almost fiendish savagery of English life in his day, we cannot in fairness put out of sight the solid results achieved by the Christian teachers. The life of the historian Bæda (A.D. 672-735) alone is a striking commentary on



find a refuge under the shadow of the Church. Beneath this shelter was growing such a culture as the age was capable of receiving; and while Bæda, not altogether happily perhaps, was learning to write Latin prose and poetry as well as any wrote either in Rome itself, Cædmon was using his native English speech to tell the story of Creation in strains which, far more than the fierce lays which celebrated the battle of Konigsburg or the exploits of Beowulf,¹ should help to shape the English of the future.

Time was, indeed, wreaking its revenge in a strange fashion. The English on their coming had swept away the relics of the Roman civilization which had at least covered the land superficially; and now they were receiving the religion, the art, and the culture of Rome so thoroughly that when, not very much later, the Danes began their inroads, these terrible warriors found scarcely a trace of the old heathenism remaining in tribes with whom they were themselves most closely akin.

English Christianity.

But the thoroughness with which the English accepted the faith and practice of Catholic Christendom involved no slavish dependence. They had never bowed to the yoke of the Roman emperor; and, in spite of all feelings of gratitude and devotion, they refused to submit themselves unreservedly to the Roman pontiff. To a certain extent they retained their mother tongue as the language of the Church; and the habit of translating portions of the Old and New Testaments led both clergy and laity (consciously or unconsciously) to exercise their judgment on what

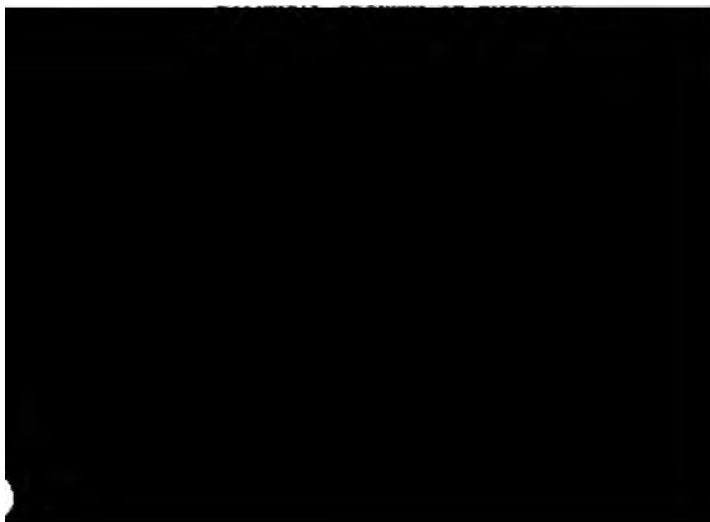
Independent Spirit of the English.

¹ The word Beowulf means the wolf-tamer. The date at which the epic poem which relates his exploits was composed is uncertain. Only one manuscript of it exists, and this belongs to the tenth century.

they translated and what they read. Latin terms were but sparingly adopted to denote matters of belief. For *Salvation* and the *Saviour* they spoke of *Health* and the *Healer*, while *hanging* and the *gallows* took the place of the *cross* and the *crucifixion*.

Even the abuses most complained of by the staunchest partisans of Rome (as, for instance, the lax ideas said to be entertained by the English as to the duties of monastic or of ecclesiastical life) furnish evidence of a spirit which was not disposed to surrender itself unconditionally to the dictates of a foreign authority. We shall see in the case of Dunstan that clergy and laity were alike disposed to favour those theories of which at the Reformation the nation expressed its emphatic approval.

CHAPTER X.



some of which imply a theory of nothing less than imperial power. So sedulously is this inflated language employed, that we are apt to forget how short the time was during which such order as they established was maintained, and to how great an extent the picture drawn is a work of imagination.

It is really of little use to speak of Egbert, the king of Wessex, as lord of all the kingdoms of England, and of his successors a hundred years later as doing his work over again, and of a still later king as giving to it a finishing stroke by subduing a region over which Egbert professed himself to be supreme. We are scarcely justified in treating seriously the scenes in which a Scottish monarch is exhibited commending his realm to an English king, when after a few years we find this English kingdom swept away by an alien dynasty set up by barbarian invaders.

Alleged Supremacy of Wessex.

The truth is, we have here the rise and fall of petty principalities, the growth of a few more powerful and considerable states, and the temporary aggrandisement of one. But at no time before the Norman conquest have we the political union of a nation, or anything even approaching to it; while the story in some parts is so full of inconsistencies, contradictions, and impossibilities as to lose almost all title to our belief.

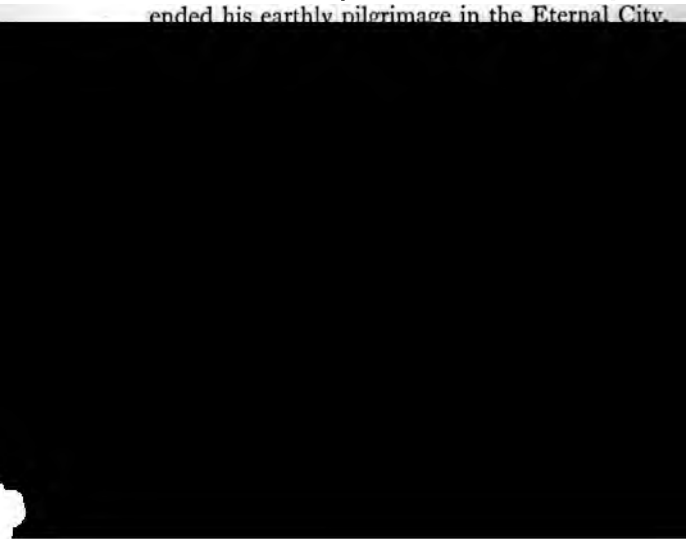
Lack of National Union.

For a time it seemed as though the lordship of the whole island must fall to the lot of the kings of Northumbria or Mercia. The prophecy of Edwin's vision (p. 40) had been fully accomplished; but in spite of this the power of the Mercian king assumed proportions still more imposing, when, if the fact be as it is stated, he was addressed as the mightiest potentate of Western Christendom by Charles the Great, commonly known as Charlemagne, the sovereign of the old

empire in which the Roman and the Teuton had equally a part. In spite of this, again, the supremacy, real or imaginary, was to pass to the son of a Kentish king, who after a severe discipline in the school of adversity ascended the throne of Cerdic.

Election of Egbert as King of Wessex. A.D. 800.

The election of Egbert falls in the same year in which Charles the Great was chosen and crowned emperor of the Romans. It was the last year of the eighth century. The power of the kings of Wessex had, thus far, advanced slowly enough. Among them had been numbered Ceadwalla (A.D. 685-688), the friend of Wilfrid of York, who probably imbued by Wilfrid with that devotion to all things Roman, which impelled him at length to seek baptism at the hands of the Roman pontiff himself. By the Pope accordingly Ceadwalla was baptized; but before the time came for laying aside his Christian (or baptismal) robe, he was taken away by a sudden illness, and an inscription in St. Peter's Church served the memory of the West Saxon king who had ended his earthly pilgrimage in the Eternal City.



which she carried out her scheme was to hurry him away from his palace after a magnificent banquet, and to bring him back as suddenly to see rooms which by her order had been filled with filth, and in which sows wallowed where nobles had but a few hours before been feasting. "So passes away," she said, "the glory of the world ; and to this loathsome state must the body even of the greatest king be brought in the grave. Care then for the spirit only, and seek its health in the city to whose bishop we owe our knowledge of the Christian faith."

Ine, beyond doubt, went to Rome, and like Ceadwalla he died there ; but mere weariness of active life may after a reign of thirty-seven years have brought him thither as effectually as the exhortations of his wife. He is said to have lived there in the garb of a common labourer, wishing to be utterly unknown. He is said also to have founded the English college there ; and this would have made him known to all the Roman populace. We may choose either of these tales or reject both ; but we cannot receive both.

Pilgrimage of
Ine to Rome.

A fact far more important than any incidents belonging to the personal life of Ine is established by the language of many of his laws. The change which distinguishes his legislation from the merciless rule by which the Britons were treated in the days of the first Teutonic inroads is, indeed, most marked. It is a change which is due wholly to the influence of Christianity.

Laws of Ine.

The first English invaders were fierce heathen ; and, as they slew or drove out their enemies, they had no need to legislate about them. Ine and the other kings of Wessex had not lost the desire to extend their dominions ; but they professed a faith

Welsh Subjects
of Ine.

which checked their lust for slaughter, and we find the Welsh in their land admitted to the protection of the law, although their inferiority to the conquerors is still most distinctly defined. Their lives are rated at a lower value than are those of English freemen, and the oath of an Englishman outweighs the oaths of many Welshmen. By the time of Alfred things are changed again. The humiliating distinctions have vanished. His Welsh subjects have been merged and lost in the great body of the English folk.

Reign of Egbert.

Under Egbert (A.D. 800-836), who calls himself king of the English, the English dominion was rapidly extended westwards. Happily the object of the conqueror was, as the laws of Ine show, no longer what it had been in the days of Hengist and of Cerdic. His purpose was not to slay but to subdue; although his sway was carried to the Land's End, the old inhabitants were neither swept away nor reduced to slavery. But as the English pressed from the east, the language of the Britons rece

ominous of dire disaster. The danger was precisely similar to that which had led the Romans to appoint a Count of the Saxon Shore. Marauders were again attacking the land, marauders seemingly more fierce and altogether more cruel and heartless than those which found their way hither under Hengist, or Ælle, or Cerdic. To a large extent the same causes which had rendered the Teutonic invasions so dreadful in the days of Vortigern added to the terrors and miseries caused by the Danish inroads in the days of Egbert and his successors.

The Danes were, in fact, precisely what the English, Jutes, and Saxons had been some three centuries before. They were still, as thoroughly as ever these had been, free from the influence of the Roman leaven which worked everywhere surely and irresistibly within the borders of the empire. They knew nothing of the religion of Rome, and they felt only savage hatred and contempt for those whom they regarded as enervated by its effects.

Danish Inroads.

The Britons had been really weakened by a civilization which for them was artificial; and the English, we can scarcely doubt, had in their turn become less fitted to cope with enemies so brutal, precisely in the measure in which they were animated by the spirit of Latin Christianity. The inmates of monastic houses lived in a religious atmosphere which rendered the very thought of war distasteful and horrible to them; and it was precisely to the religious houses that the fierce heathen plunderers were irresistibly attracted.

The Danes and the English.

These foundations were already centres of wealth in the midst of a people struggling with a poor soil and a hard climate. Here were brought together treasures such as could not be seen elsewhere, vessels

The Monastic Houses.

of the sanctuary blazing with jewels, altars draped with hangings stiff with gold embroidery, robes more magnificent than those of kings, books the outside of which, studded with masses of precious metal gems, had a value for thieves who regarded the accomplishment of reading as the lowest of degradations for a freeman.

**Danish Assaults
on these
Houses.**

All this wealth, all these splendid churches, which might so well be used as banqueting halls for their carousing and deep drinking, were, with all their stores of food and wine, to be had almost without effort. In none of these houses did they encounter any obstinate resistance; in many not a blow was struck by the monks in self-defence. The vengeance of the people was in most instances baffled by the rapidity of their movements. The rovers who swooped down on the coast at break of day would be far away at sea again before the sun was high in the heaven, leaving behind them a heap of smoking ruins; the mangled bodies of monks or nuns, whose dying agonies had furnished them with excell

a sign that the Danes intended to settle in the land. This intention declared itself more and more as time went on ; but many years were yet to pass before the struggle was to assume the guise of a conflict between the Danish and the English kings for the sovereignty of the country.

The confusion caused by these devastations was not, however, so great as to prevent Æthelwulf from undertaking a pilgrimage to Rome. His wife was dead, and he took with him his son Alfred, who had already visited the Eternal City under the care of Swithun, bishop of Winchester. On his return he married Judith, the daughter of the French king, Charles the Bald, a girl only twelve or thirteen years of age. The remaining two years of his life he spent rather as a vassal of his son Æthelbald than as an independent king. On his father's death Æthelbald married Judith ; but so great was the outcry raised in consequence, that he agreed to a separation. Judith, returning to her father's court, became the wife of Baldwin, afterwards Earl of Flanders ; and from their union descended Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror.

On the death of Æthelbald (860), his brother Æthelberht, who was already king of Kent, Essex, Sussex, and Surrey, claimed, and was elected to, the kingdom of Wessex. He reigned but five years ; and, seemingly, before he died the Northmen had sacked the city of Winchester.

In the equally short reign of his brother Æthelred, who succeeded him, the Danes glutted their beastly and fiendish cruelty in their onslaughts on the monasteries of Croyland, Medeshampstede (Peterborough), and Ely. To behead abbots on the steps of the altars, to deluge the sanctuary with the blood

Marriage of
Æthelwulf
with Judith,
daughter of
Charles the
Bald.

Reign of Æthel-
berht,

Murder of Ed-
mund, King
of East
Anglia. A.D.
870.

of children, to inflict the foulest wrongs on helpless women, was for these loathsome wretches a pleasant pastime. On this awful tragedy the English prince looked, it would seem, with an astonishing indifference; nor were they roused to more vigorous action when the East Anglian king, Edmund, having fallen in Danish hands, was bound naked to a tree, scourged with whips, pierced with a multitude of arrows, and then beheaded (A.D. 870). His people revered him as a martyr, and a great church rose over his tomb at St. Edmund's Bury; but of any advance towards anything like a national union there is not a trace.

Battle of
Basing. A.D.
831.

The country was fallen on dark days indeed. Æthelred received a mortal wound at the battle of Basing, and his brother, the great Alfred, was elected king in his stead, by the unanimous choice of the Witan of Wessex (A.D. 871).

CHAPTER VII



was owing to him alone that, when Danish kings ruled in England, their sway did not prove an intolerable curse, and that Christianity was enabled to exercise an influence which made Cnut (Canute) a not altogether unworthy successor of Alfred himself.

Of this great and good man we have a picture, undoubtedly faithful in the main, drawn by his biographer, Asser. The story is not without its difficulties. At twelve years of age or more, Asser tells us, the boy was illiterate,—in other words, he could not read,—and the cause which he assigns for this ignorance is the unworthy neglect of his parents and nurses. We may ask, not what his parents and nurses were about, but what Swithun, the bishop of Winchester, was thinking of or doing, while he had charge of the child on his first visit to Rome; or how it was that the Pope, who anointed him, asked no question and dropped no hints about his education.

Life of Alfred
by Asser.

That he was a singularly bright and winning child, and one in whom the sense of duty was early and deeply quickened, there can be no question; but we are again perplexed, when we come to the pretty story which tells us that his mother, showing him and his brother one day a book of poetry, said that he who should soonest read it should have it as his own. Charmed with the illuminated letters of the manuscript, he asked if she really meant what she said; and on being assured of this he quickly acquired the power of reading, and gained the prize.

Stories of his
Childhood.

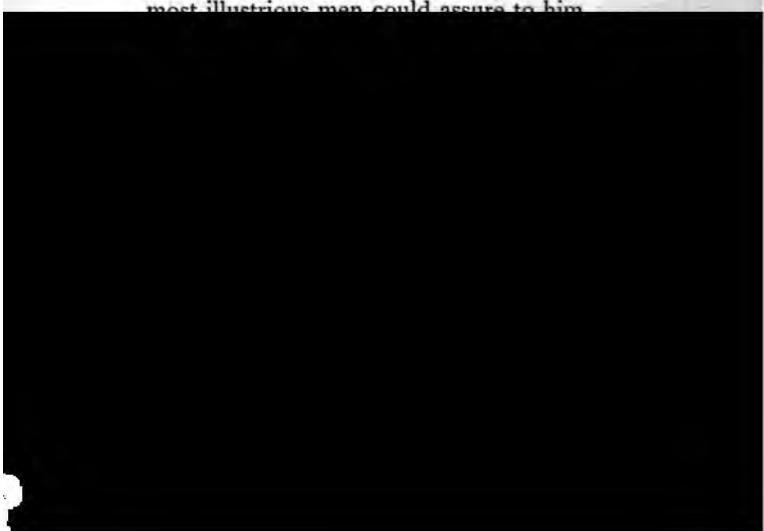
But his mother had died when he was only six years old. His father remained unmarried six years, and then married Judith, a girl of twelve. Alfred and Judith were thus precisely, or within a few months, of the same age; and it is to the last

Alfred and his
Mother.

degree unlikely, even if her own education were more advanced than his (which again is not likely), that she should take this maternal interest in a boy as old as herself.

**Difficulties in
the Narrative
of Asser.**

The truth is that, if we are to accept all Asser's statements, it is hard to say what good results had been achieved by his two visits to Rome. Even after he had learnt to read and made himself acquainted with the ritual and devotions of the Church, Asser adds, with a mournful expression of regret, that "he could not gratify his ardent desire to learn the liberal arts, because, as he said, there were no good teachers at that time in all the kingdom of the West Saxons." Yet in Rome he had seen the highest art which the world could display, in music, in painting, in sculpture, as well as in books and in the furniture and adornment of churches. He had spent a year there when he was eleven or twelve years old, and he had enjoyed all the advantages which the highest station and the company of the most learned and the most illustrious men could assure to him.



men cheat themselves, to their grievous hurt or to their ruin.

Such was the man who was called to a throne at a time when the land was being overrun by troops or hordes of the most ferocious plunderers. He had to look on the miseries of others, which he could not relieve, and he had to bear up, as best he could, under the tortures of a mysterious bodily malady which oppressed him, as Asser tells us, incessantly from the twentieth to the forty-fourth year of his life.

Position of
Alfred on his
Election to
the Throne.

Asser's account, which, to say the least, is strangely confused and indistinct, seems to say that Alfred was from his infancy afflicted with some dire internal disorder, of a kind so exquisitely painful as to prompt the prayer that God in His mercy would exchange its torments for some other lighter disease, if only this lighter disease should not show itself openly in the body, and so render him an object of contempt and less able to benefit mankind.

Alfred's bodily
Health.

This prayer, offered up at a wayside shrine, was, Alfred felt, immediately answered. The disease was gone entirely, he was in sound health. But sound health, he feared, might wean his heart from God, and therefore he prayed yet again that "he might be strengthened for his work by some infirmity such as he might bear, but not such as would render him imbecile in his worldly duties;" and accordingly he was on his marriage assailed by this new disorder, which clung to him as a thorn in the flesh for nearly a quarter of a century. It is more likely that the supposed disappearance of the first disease was only a respite, than that he was afflicted by two chronic disorders of different sorts.

His Chronic
Illness.


To the depression which comes of bodily pain were added anxieties peculiarly oppressive to one who saw

Condition of his
Subjects.

how much was needed for the humanizing of his people, even if no enemy were in the land. They were grossly ignorant ; their manners were coarse and debased, and their vices were brutal and degrading. He ought to have been at work, founding schools for their education, and doing what might be necessary for the repression of crime ; but instead of this his thoughts were diverted to difficulties still more pressing and terrible.

Fall of the
Mercian King-
dom.

Danish savages were ravaging the country, and had plainly no intention of leaving it. His own men fought bravely, but they were altogether overmatched in numbers, and he found himself driven to use money as an instrument of deliverance. The Danes, having wintered in London, advanced into the Mercian kingdom (A.D. 874), and the Mercian chief Burhred, worn down by misery, abandoned his realm, and reached Rome only to die of a broken heart. In his place the marauders put Ceolwulf, a Mercian thane, who pledged himself to pay the tribute and whom they put to death when he could



875) set about their tasks of robbery and murder. The abbey of Lindisfarne was burnt to the ground ; but the monks managed to escape to the mountains. By self-inflicted wounds the nuns of Coldingham repelled violence of one kind only to fall victims to the devouring flames.

But nothing is gained by going through the long catalogue of sickening horrors. In every quarter the heavens seemed to be laden with gloom. The Danish Guthrum had seized the castle and monastery of Wareham, and made it his stronghold, knowing the weakness of the English as besiegers. Alfred offered to buy out his enemies, and on receiving their promise demanded hostages, which he was allowed to choose from the noblest of the chiefs. He bound them further by the strongest oaths. The oaths were broken ; the hostages were left to their fate ; and the Danes, moving by forced marches, took possession of Exeter (A.D. 876).

Seizure of
Exeter by the
Danes A.D.
876.

The English, it would seem, had long forgotten that their fathers were as much at home on the sea as on the land. Alfred felt that, if he was to cope with the enemy, he must face them on the waters as well as on the battlefield ; but even when he had fitted out a few ships, he found himself obliged to man them with foreign mercenaries. Trusting himself to these men, he encountered seven Danish ships, captured one, and put the rest to flight. The success justified further efforts. More ships were built ; his people no longer shrank from serving in them ; and it seemed as though they would be well rewarded. The Danish cavalry marched to Exeter ; their infantry embarked on board their fleet, and were dashed on the coast by a storm which destroyed half their vessels. Guthrum was ready again to swear oaths,

Formation of an
English Fleet.

and to give hostages ; and this time he quit Wessex for Mercia (A.D. 877).

Capture of Chip-
penham by
Guthrum.

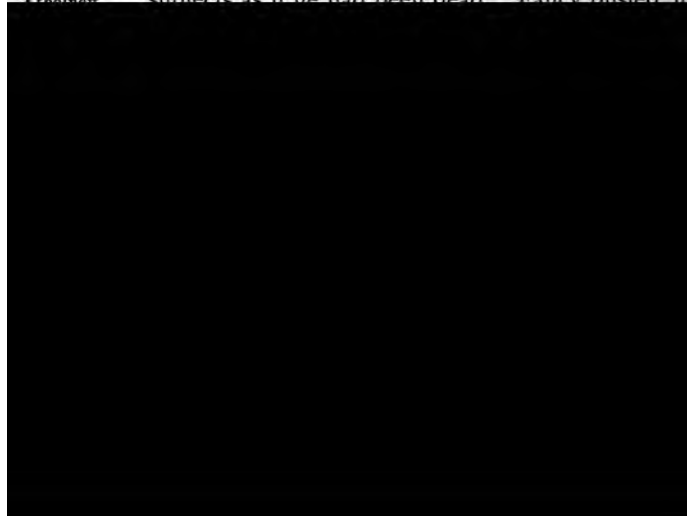
A few months later (A.D. 878) Alfred was a fugitive skulking in the morasses of Somersetshire. His sudden turn in his fortunes had been brought about by a change in the tactics of Guthrum. Thus after the toil of the summer campaign, the Danes had given the winter to idleness and sloth. Guthrum now ordered all his people to meet at a given place on the first day of the year ; and within a week they were masters of Chippenham.

Alfred at Athel-
ney. A.D. 878.

Alfred, who was sojourning there, all but fell into their hands. At first he thought of rushing desperately into the thick of his enemies ; but, listening to sober counsels of friends, who besought him to reserve himself for better times, he made his way to some marsh land between the converging streets of the Parret and the Tone, afterwards known as Æthelingey (Athelney), the Prince's Island.

Stories of his
Sojourn in
Athelney.

Here for a time he was as completely lost to his subjects as if he had been dead. Fancy busied it



to gather round him. The men of Somerset were still faithful to the king who had not spared himself in their defence, and in his humiliation they forgot the harshness and severity by which, in the early part of his reign, he is said to have chilled and almost quenched the affection of his people.

Cast down, he was not dismayed. He was content to move slowly and warily. As he slept he was cheered, we are told, by a vision of St. Cuthbert, who assured him that he should soon be enabled to smite his enemies, and to resume the work of good government over his subjects. In the day-time he succeeded with his followers in cutting off straggling parties of the Danes; and once, in the guise of a harper, he went boldly, it is said, into the Danish camp, and there, while he delighted them with his music, marked the laxity of their discipline and the points at which a sudden surprise would most probably achieve success. Gaining courage after a while, he joined his marshy hiding-place to the mainland by a bridge, which he protected by a fort.

Other signs were not wanting which seemed to show that the tide had turned. The sons of the fierce Viking Ragnar Lodbrog, whom the vipers had, according to the story, stung to death in the dungeons of the Northumbrian Ælle, were ravaging the northern coasts of Devon (A.D. 878). The English ealdorman took refuge in the castle of Kynwith, and the Danish leaders sat down at the base of the hill, till thirst should compel his surrender. As day broke, the ealdorman came down from his intrenchments, burst into the Danish camp, slew their generals, and seized their standard or flag of the Raven. This mysterious ensign, woven, we are told, in a single night by the daughters of Ragnar, and


Alfred's Vision

The Danish
Raven.

endowed with the magic power of foretelling the issue of a fight by the flapping of its wings, was laid at the feet of Alfred, who was himself encouraged by seeing the effect which the possession of this banner had upon the minds of his followers.

Victory of
Alfred at
Ethandune.

The tidings that their king was not dead were spreading quickly throughout the land; and Alfred soon found himself at the head of a force with which he needed not to fear to take the field. Pitching camp on the heights of Ethandune (not far from Westbury, in Wiltshire), he drew up his army in order of battle, and awaited the attack of the enemy. The struggle was felt on both sides to be one for life or death. Guthrum's Danes fought with the dog obstinacy of murderous savages; while Alfred's Englishmen held out with all their might for the righteous defence of their country, their laws, and their freedom. The conflict was fierce and long; but at length the Northmen were driven back, and the English followed with the determination of exacting a stern vengeance for the wrongs of many years.



treaty known as the peace of Wedmore (A.D. 878), Guthrum became the vassal king of East Anglia; and the whole land beyond Watling Street, a line stretching from the Thames through Bedford to the Welsh border, passed under the sway of the Danish chief. England was thus portioned into the three divisions, Wessex, Mercia, and Denelagu, or the realm in which the law was Danish.

Alfred's earthly wars were not yet ended. He was yet to baffle the efforts by which the sea-king Hasting, whose name had become a sound of terror on the banks of the Seine, strove for three years to win for himself a fairer domain in England. He was yet to do battle with the Danes by sea as well as by land; but the main fury of the storm had passed away, and he was able now to turn his thoughts to tasks by which the welfare of his people might be permanently promoted.

Later Victories
of Alfred.

Having provided for the defence of the country, and having, especially, established a navy with which the Danish ships were wholly unable to cope, he set to work to reform the administration of justice, to draw up a new code according with the requirements of the time, and in every possible way to encourage learning, culture, and refinement. The horrors of the Danish inroads had well-nigh dealt a death-blow to all education. His countrymen knew nothing of science, nothing of philosophy, nothing of history; and he sought to quicken in them the desire for knowledge by translating such books as the *Epitome* of Orosius (a Spanish priest and historian of the fifth century), and the *Consolations* of the philosopher and statesman Boethius, who was put to death by an ungrateful master, A.D. 524.

Alfred's Work
as a Lawgiver
and as a
Teacher.

He toiled, indeed, for their good as none others

His personal
Character.

had toiled before him ; and although he, like other men, had his faults, there is no reason for supposing that his fair fame was soiled by vices such as some of the sentences of his biographer and of our critics would seem to ascribe to him. "I have striven all my life long," he said, "to live worthily." These are words which would not fall lightly from the lip of a man to whom truthfulness was more precious than the air which he breathed ; and they prove conclusively that the statements of his biographer are not to be taken as settling every point on his own authority. In his earlier years he may have been somewhat oppressive, high-handed, and selfish. Later on he made noble amends for his shortcomings, and, dying in 1601, he left behind him a name cherished by his country with reverence and affection.

CHAPTER XIV.

FORTUNES OF THE ENGLISH KINGDOM AND CHURCH



he issue of the quarrel to the arbitrament of battle. On further thought he withdrew to seek aid from the Danes, who were ready enough, as we may suppose, to express their belief in the validity of his claim. They took up arms in his cause, and in his cause they won a victory; but the death of Æthelwald in the fight more than compensated to Edward for his defeat. Henceforth his reign is marked by a steady advance of his power, which with the consent of the Witan he handed on at his death to his son Æthelstan (A.D. 925).

There is no reason to doubt that the reigns of Edward and of Æthelstan were marked by a steady increase in the power of the kings of Wessex; but the details of the story are by no means free from difficulties, and we are rapidly approaching a portion of English history in which the difficulties become so great that we must either reject some statements in the tale, or be content to confess our ignorance of the facts as they took place.

Growth of the
Kingdom
Wessex. c

Edward seems to have made himself master of all England south of the Humber; but when we are told that the Princes of Wales, Northumberland, Strathclyde, and Scotland, all by their own free act submitted to him, "choosing him to father and lord," we can only say that the act must have had little meaning, as they all had to be conquered over again; and when they were so conquered, the conquest seems to have produced no effect whatever.

Dominion
Edward. c


Such accounts are worth nothing, unless we have evidence in their favour from more than one side. The traditions of Scotland tell us of a Scottish Grig (Gregory) the Great, who drives out the Danes, humbles England, and conquers Ireland, but who makes no other advantage of his success than to see

Traditions
Scottish
quests. c

that these two kingdoms are rightly governed by the legitimate sovereigns. The English traditions know nothing of such a conquest; and it has been said that the story is just about as true as the story of the king of Scotland with seven royal companions rowing the barge of the English king Edgar on the Dee.

**Victory of
Æthelstan at
Brunanburh.
A.D. 938.**

The name of Æthelstan is associated especially with the victory of Brunanburh (A.D. 936). Strange enough, the victory ends a war of seven years against the very chieftains of Northumberland, Strathclyde, and Scotland, who are said of their own accord and with the consent of all their subjects to have submitted themselves to king Edward. The lay which professes to tell the story of this fight speaks of utter discomfiture of the enemy. Five kings and seven earls lay dead upon the field, and a great carnage had never been seen "since from the hither Angles and Saxons came over the broad sea." In spite of all this, the powers, whatever they were, seem to have remained just as they had been.



to the English king Edmund the Elder. Yet this commendation has been said to furnish the true justification for the acts of his namesake the Plantagenet Edward I. in the thirteenth century.

There are things for which a king cannot bind his subjects without their consent, and in which one generation cannot fetter the action of another; and submission to intruders and invaders is one of them. The wars of the English kings with Scotland after the Norman Conquest were as wanton and as wicked, as cruel and as useless, as those which they waged against the kings of France; and any justification which is urged for the one holds good of the other. But nothing can justify wrong.

Relation of the
English Kings
with Scot-
land.

The affections of Eadred were bestowed chiefly on his chancellor Turketul, and on Dunstan, abbot of King Ine's house of Glastonbury. The strongest influence exercised over him was the influence of the Church, and it was felt by Turketul more powerfully than by himself. The chancellor determined to throw off the burden of worldly cares and business. Proclamation was made that he wished to pay all his debts, and to make threefold reparation to any whom he might have wronged. Having bestowed fifty-four of his manors on the king, he gave six to the monastery of Croyland, and then resigned the abbey itself with all its appurtenances into the hands of the sovereign, from whom he received the whole again with the grant of fresh privileges. Here he lived for twenty-seven years as abbot, and died, leaving at the least a fame more serene than that of his friend Dunstan, whose name is enrolled in the catalogue of the saints.

Turketul and
Dunstan.

CHAPTER XV.

EADWIG, DUNSTAN, AND THE CLERGY.

Reign of Eadwig (the Fair).

OVER the life of Eadred's nephew and successor Eadwig (A.D. 955-958) the authority of Dunstan was a baleful shadow. Dunstan was steeped in the spirit of the most rigid monachism, and he regarded marriage of clergy as an evil not less hideous than unrestrained licence in laymen. He had not reached the state of those who denounced the practice of all art as a diabolical snare. He could work in iron, in ivory, in gold, and in silver. He could compose manuscripts, and he had some skill in painting; his occupations, whatever they were, were all carried on in a cell of some six or seven feet square. There he wrought out his curious designs, and here he wrestled with the foul fiend, whose nose he is said to have seized with his fiery pincers. But the solid

miracles, many of which unfortunately bear upon them a strange look of fraud. A council of the clergy (some under, and some not under, monastic rule, the former being known as the regular clergy, and the latter as the secular clergy) was held at Calne. Dunstan and his supporters were at one end of the room, when the platform on which his opponents stood came down with a crash, and buried many in the ruins.

The accident was singularly opportune,—so opportune indeed as to remind us forcibly of Dunstan's mechanical skill. His biographers are loud in praises of the holiness which was rewarded with such signal proofs of Divine grace ; but it has been well said that they have unconsciously darkened him into one of the most odious of mankind.

The Character
of Dunstan.

Dunstan's monastic zeal found means to display itself at the coronation of Eadwig. From the banquet the young king hurried away with perhaps inconsiderate haste to the society of his wife and her mother. It is at the least possible that he found it more congenial than the riotous drinking which went on in the great hall. The nobles, we are told, felt themselves insulted by his departure, and Dunstan acted as their willing messenger to force him back to the unwelcome revelry. He further declared their will that the young wife's mother must be driven away under pain of death if she should dare to return. But Æthelgifu did not go, and Dunstan did not forget the menaces which expressed her indignation.

Coronation of
Eadwig.


Eadwig's throne was not a bed of roses. His authority had been disowned in the country to the north of the Thames, where his brother Eadgar had been chosen king. He attempted to put down this resistance, but his forces were inadequate to the task ;

Story of Æthel-
gifu.

and he was hastening back with Æthelgifu into Wessex, when his pursuers got hold of the unhappy woman, and left her hamstrung by the wayside to die in her misery. The monkish chroniclers, not content with this savage retribution, blackened her character, as well as that of her daughter, with charges of the most heinous kind.

**The Marriage of
the Clergy.**

The reason for this is plain. Dunstan, who had been banished from Eadwig's territories, had been welcomed in those of his brother Eadgar. The latter favoured, the former set himself against, the schemes which treated the marriage of the clergy as both a crime and a sin. The great battle, which was to decide whether the clergy were to remain a part of the people or not, was being fought out here more obstinately than perhaps in any other country of Europe; and it was one on the issue of which, as Englishmen feel to this day, the happiness of the people largely depended. It has been treated by historians generally as a mere ecclesiastical dispute. It was really a matter which affected the highest



only against the marriage of the clergy, but to make all the clergy monks, or, in other words, to bring them all under the discipline of monastic rule. He was only partially successful; and in this country it can scarcely be said that the victory of Dunstan's followers was ever really complete.

CHAPTER XVI.

REIGNS OF EADGAR AND ÆTHELRED.

THAT the sixteen years of Eadgar's reign (A.D. 958–975) were a time of much prosperity for England, and that he exercised a real authority over the whole land, is beyond doubt. Apart from the petty warfare which seldom ceased on the Welsh border, he had no enemies to encounter; and for the Danes who were established in the land he had only a friendly feeling, which expressed itself in the resolution that they should be on precisely the same footing with his other subjects. Popular fancy, indeed, soon busied itself with exalting the greatness of this peaceful king. In place of money, Eadgar, it is said, insisted that the Welsh should bring him as their yearly tribute the heads of three hundred wolves; and in four years, we are assured, the impost ceased with the death of the last wolf.

Power
of
Eadgar.

According to the common belief, the English kings derived their authority from their election by the free Witan and from their hallowing or coronation together; and we shall find, when we reach the time of the Norman Conquest, that the Ætheling, although chosen king, was easily set aside in favour of the

The
Crowning
of
English
Kings.

victorious Duke William, because, although elected he had not been crowned.

**Eadgar at
Chester, and
the Vassal
Kings.**

But for some reason, which has not been mentioned, the crowning or hallowing in Eadgar's case did not take place until he had been king for fifteen years. He was then crowned at Bath, A.D. 973, and then taking ship, went by sea to Chester, where, according to the story, eight vassal kings, headed by Kenneth of Scotland, rowed his barge on the Dee. We have seen already what this tale may be worth (p. 68).

**Challenge of
Eadgar
Kenneth
Scotland.**

As a general rule, we may reasonably suspect the truth of any stories of which the writers of the time know nothing. We shall see, when we come to the reign of Henry II., that the beautiful legend which relates the incident leading to the marriage of the mother of Thomas Becket must be rejected, because it is full of marvels, but because it is known to the friends of the archbishop, who would have been eager to believe and to relate it, if they had ever heard it. So we doubt the story of Eadgar offering to fight Kenneth of Scotland for calling him a dwarf, because we find this mentioned for the first

hide her beauty from the king. His entreaties only made her resolve to display before him the full splendour of her charms; and the king in a hunt, which took place soon afterwards, found an opportunity for thrusting his spear through the body of his friend. The widow became the wife of Eadgar, and the mother of Æthelred, a king whom the English people had little reason to honour or regret.

Two years after his coronation (A.D. 975) Eadgar died. He was not much more than thirty years old. Of his two sons, Edward, the child of his first wife, was only thirteen years of age, and Æthelred was a boy of seven. After a strife which threatened to run on into civil war, Edward, whom his father wished to have as his successor, was chosen king. Three years later (A.D. 978), he was stabbed at the gate of Corfe Castle, where his stepmother was then living. Ælfthryth is said to have hired the murderer, that her son might take his brother's place. Her wish, if it was her wish, was fulfilled. The assassin's dagger won for Edward the name of the Martyr; and the Witan chose for their king the boy Æthelred, known as the Unready.

Death of Eadgar, A.D. 975.

The meaning of this name is commonly misunderstood. It does not mean that Æthelred was always taken by surprise, or that he was never active and stirring. He was seldom caught unawares, and he often showed as much energy as any of his predecessors. But he was never active at the right season or in the right place; and times were coming which would tax the wisdom, strength, and resolution even of an Æthelstan or an Alfred. The troubles came, and they found in place of these great men a prince well described as the Unready (On-rede), or the Witless, the epithet being suggested directly by his

Æthelred the Unready).

name Æthelred, which denotes the man of noble mind and sound judgment.

the Danes of
East Anglia
and Northumbria.

He had, indeed, to contend with the same enemies which they encountered. The Danes in the days Egbert had come first as wandering marauders, landing one day and vanishing the next; then as armies disciplined for a campaign; and lastly as permanent settlers (p. 54). Since that time, the Danes of East Anglia and Northumbria had become part and parcel of the English people and of the English nation, far as an English nation could then be said to exist and their right to all the liberties of Englishmen had been fully acknowledged by Eadgar and other kings.

the battle of Mal-
don. A.D. 983.

But the land from which the old swarms had come was ready to send forth new. The plague of the later invasions fell first on the southern coasts of England, and it passed away for a time altogether. The marauders then attacked the northern coast of Somerset, and three years later landed on the eastern coast of the island, in numbers and with a discipline which implied a purpose of something like settlement.

it is true, greedily adopted the device which Brihtnoth had spurned with angry contempt; but it cannot be said that he invented it.

The difference between Æthelred and Alfred lay in the simple fact that he trusted in bribery as an end, and that Alfred did not. Savages seldom keep their word. Alfred learnt the lesson at once; Æthelred never learnt it through a reign of nearly forty years. If Alfred offered money to Guthrum, he at the same time raised troops, built ships, and made ready in every way to drive out the enemy. When Æthelred paid money, he did so that he might be saved the trouble of doing anything more.

Comparison of
Æthelred
with Alfred.

Æthelred soon found that he had traitors to deal with as well as enemies; but we cannot say with the same certainty that he made it a rule to restore traitors to the trusts which they had betrayed. It is one of the most inexplicable features in the history of this strange and troubled time, that treachery is busy and successful everywhere, and that its deadly work is done not merely with impunity, but to the gain and exaltation of the traitor. It is this which makes the narrative so far incredible. Either the historians have strangely confused names, and jumbled two, three, or more men into one person, or the kings and their Witan were insane. To a certain extent we are brought to this alternative in the reign of Æthelred; we are driven to it absolutely in dealing with the history of his heroic son Edmund Ironside.

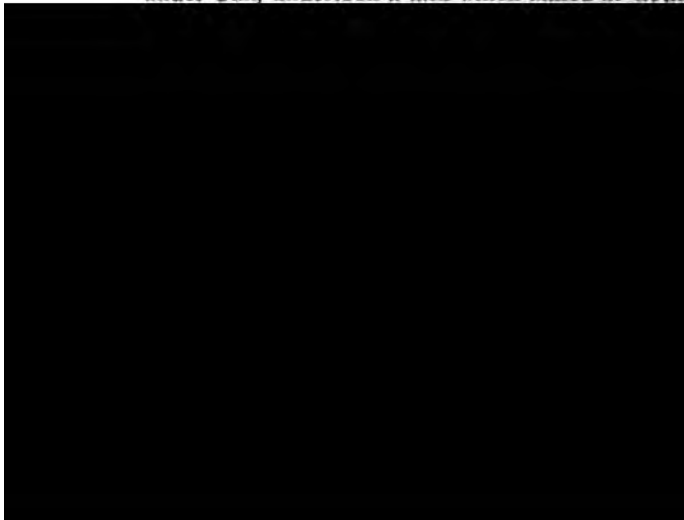
Prevalence of
Treachery.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DANISH INVASIONS, AND THE MASSACRE OF
ST. BRICE.

Treachery of Ælfrio. THE Mercian Ældorman Ælfrio was the first in the long line of traitors. His first act was to send the enemy a warning, which enabled them to avoid being surrounded by the English fleet; his second was to join them with his own squadron (A.D. 992). In this instance the invaders were defeated in the fight which followed. Ælfrio's ship was taken, and he also escaped. Æthelred put out the eyes of his son, a boy too young to have any share in his father's crime; but he received the father back, we are told, into favour, and placed it in his power to betray him or more.

Invasion of Swend and Olaf. A.D. 994. Two years later, A.D. 994, a combined force of Danes under their king Swend, and of Norwegians under Olaf, undertook a task which aimed at nothing less than the conquest of England.



furnish food and pay for the crews, and the kingdom was taxed to provide a payment of sixteen thousand pounds for the two invading kings.

After wintering at Southampton, the Danes and the Norwegians departed. Olaf went to return no more. He had promised to remain neutral, and he kept his promise. If he did so from a sense of his duty as a Christian, he should have the credit which he deserves; but the history of his life shows that his zeal for Christianity was on the same level with that of Mahomet for Islam.¹ Each enforced his faith at the sword's point; but the action of the Christian who professed to receive the Sermon on the Mount was more incongruous than that of the Arabian prophet, who offered to the unbeliever the choice of the Koran or death.

Nine years passed before Swend came back to England, and he came then to take dire vengeance for a great crime, and to dethrone the criminal Æthelred. In the meanwhile, this ill-judging prince had been brought into relations with another sovereign, which were to affect deeply the future history of England. It had been the custom of the northern marauders and pirates to sell in the ports of Normandy the booty gathered on the English coasts. With his usual infatuation, Æthelred seems to have thought it an easier task to deal with the Norman duke than with a Danish or Norwegian chieftain.

He had no hesitation, therefore, in sending a fleet, and in charging the admiral, it is said, to bring to him the Norman duke with his hands tied behind his back (A.D. 996). The fleet returned with the tidings, that of the whole army landed from the ships one

Olaf of Norway.

Æthelred and the Norman Duke.

Defeat of the English by the Normans. A.D. 996.

¹ By the word Islam Mahometans denote the whole body of believers in the creed of the Koran, their sacred book.

man only had escaped alive. The tale is probably gross exaggeration, but it seems to prove that English were decisively defeated.

**Marriage of
Æthelred and
Emma of Nor-
mandy.
A.D. 1002.**

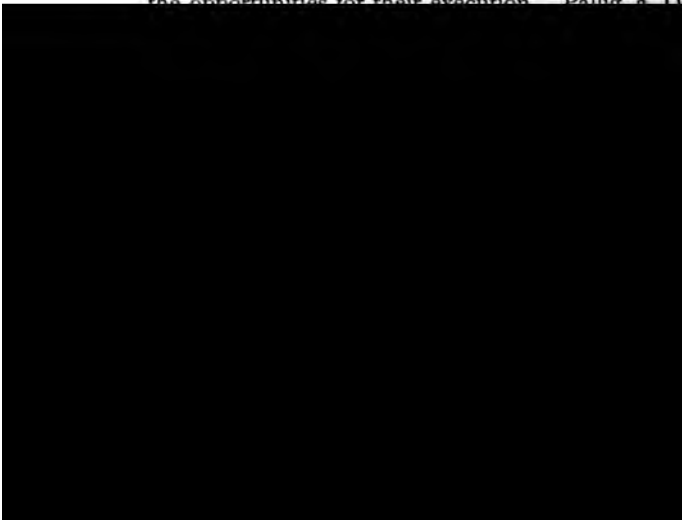
The peace which followed ended in a closer alliance. Æthelred's first wife, the mother of Edmund Ironside, was dead. As his second wife he wedded (A.D. 1000) Emma, the sister of the Duke of Normandy, and thus the two countries were brought into relation which suggested to Duke William two generations later the possibility of his becoming king of England.

Emma-Ælfgifu

In her new home Emma was known by the name Ælfgifu, which in its Latinized form becomes Elfrida (the *gift* of the *elves*, or fairies). Here she became the mother of Edward the Confessor, whose extravagant fondness for everything Norman and dislike of everything English led directly to the overthrow of Harold at Senlac (Hastings).

**Treachery of
Pallig.**

Soon after this marriage the Danish ravages were renewed on a large scale, and were marked by treacheries which argue singular blindness in those who furnished the opportunities for their execution. Pallig, a Danish



of the whole Danish population in England,—in other words, of perhaps half, or more than half, the inhabitants of East Anglia and Northumberland. So regarded, it might most fairly be, as it has been, classed with such crowning iniquities as the massacre of the eve of St. Bartholomew.¹

But bad though Æthelred may have been both as a king and as a man, we have no more excuse for judging him, than for judging any one else, unjustly. The only writer belonging to the time whose testimony we have is the English chronicler, who, under the year 1002, tells us of an order issued by Æthelred for the slaying of all the Danish men in England. 'This,' he adds, 'was done on St. Brice's mass-day, because it had been made known to the king that the Danes purposed to take his life and afterwards that of all his Witan (or councillors), and so to get his kingdom.'

Account of the
English
Chronicler.

There is nothing in this statement which makes it necessary to suppose that the order was given or executed in secrecy, while the chronicler seems distinctly to say that only Danish men were to be slain. This at once shuts out any notion of a massacre of Danes whose families had been peaceably settled in the country for generations, and the conclusion is that the order was directed against those of the recent Danish invaders who had remained in England after the last treaty, which stayed their hands with English gold. It was directed, therefore, against enemies who had broken their word, who could not be trusted, and who were habitually and invariably forsworn; and the plan was devised as a requital, and an anticipation, of treachery, for which

Alleged Pur-
poses of the
Massacre.

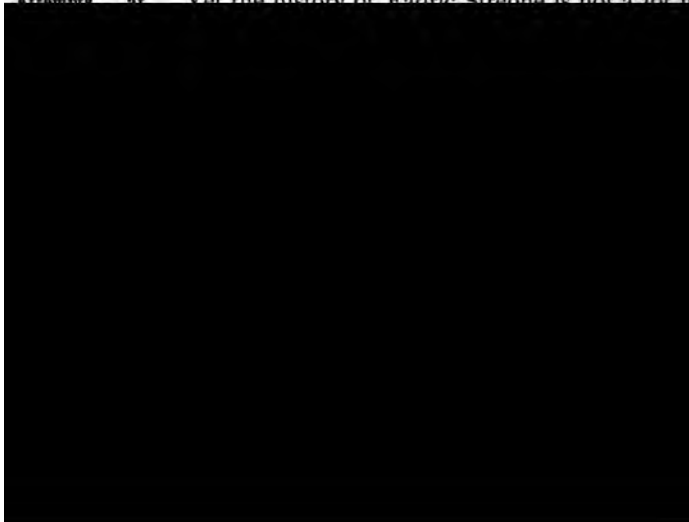
¹ The massacre of the Huguenots, carried out in Paris and elsewhere, in the reign of Charles IX., A.D. 1572.

upon their readers to accept the story as it stands. This, of course, we may do, if the incidents narrated are not in themselves incredible; but, except in earlier scenes, the history of Eadric Streone is not at all belief, unless, indeed, we assume that the king and all his Council were utterly wicked or incurably insane.

**Nature of these
Difficulties.**

If the English fleet under Lord Nelson had been treacherously betrayed and destroyed on the banks of the Nile, and if we were told that at Lord Nelson's special desire the traitor had been placed as second in command of the fleet at Copenhagen long afterwards, we should say that the fact was credible, unless Nelson and all who had any concern in making the appointment had gone mad. But if we were told that the fleet at Copenhagen had been betrayed and destroyed like the fleet in Aboukir Bay, and that the traitor had nevertheless been appointed the colleague of Nelson at Trafalgar, we should assume that no amount of testimony could convince us of the truth of absolute impossibilities.

Attempts at — Yet the history of Eadric Streone is not a jot more



ment; that the king and his favourites showed a defiant disregard of their duty, and that the people were, for the time, in most ways better than their rulers. It is of far more importance to have this fact impressed upon our minds than to have our memory loaded with the names and the deeds of all the actors in the story. The mere cramming and stuffing down of events with their dates, and of the names of kings and generals with a string of their exploits, is a thoroughly useless and mischievous work, unless we really catch the meaning of what they did, and see why things went in one way rather than in another.

We need only say, then, that from the days of Æthelred to those of Harold who fell at Senlac, a crop of traitors was never wanting. When Swend reached England, he was opposed by Ælfric, who, ten years before, had betrayed an English fleet to its destruction (p. 78). Ælfric was now in command of the army, and, when the enemy came in sight, a pretended fit of sickness served as an excuse for avoiding a fight, and the invader was left to carry on his murderous work unhindered.

**Renewed
Treachery
Ælfric.**

In the following year (1004) the Danish attack on Norwich roused the patriotic spirit of Ulfcytel, who commanded in East Anglia, and whose name attests his Danish descent. Norwich was taken by Swend and burned, and the Council of the East Anglian kingdom, summoned by Ulfcytel, resolved to make peace with the invader. But no promises could bind Swend, the apostate from Christianity to heathenism.

**Burning
Norwich.
1004.**

The Danes assailed and burned Thetford, and Ulfcytel faced them in a battle which was virtually a victory for the English, although neither side, it would seem, kept the field. The invaders frankly

**Battle of
ford.**

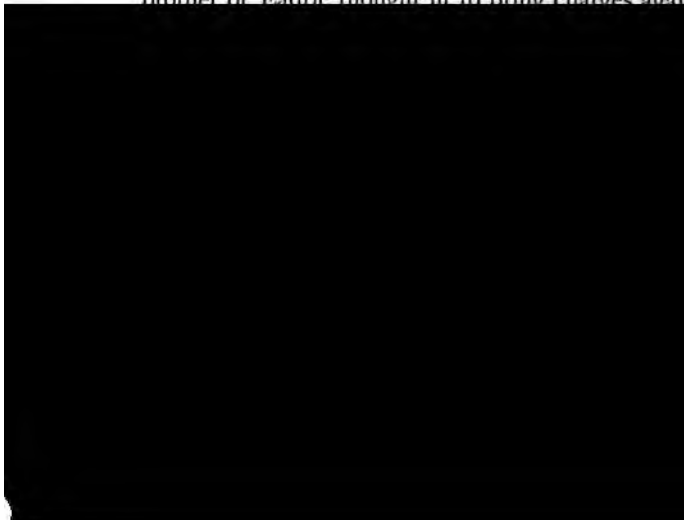
confessed that never in England had they undergo hand-play so severe as that which marked this fight. The course of events would have been different indeed, if all the English leaders had been true and loyal men like Ulfcytel.

CHAPTER XIX.

DEPOSITION AND FLIGHT OF ÆTHELRED.

**Destruction of
an English
Fleet.**

THE career of Ulfcytel stands out in pleasant contrast with that of Eadric Streone, to whom murder was congenial as treason. The Danish inroads went with one break, which lasted for two years (A.D. 1007-8); and by the advice of his Council Æthelred availed himself of the respite to raise a fleet equal to the task before it. The ships were built and manned, but the work was done to less than no purpose. Eadric's brother thought fit to bring charges against



the treacherous desertion of a Thane, sprung of a Danish stock, insured his defeat. The English were now so thoroughly disunited, that any further stand seemed hopeless. Such forces as they raised were never in the right place, and never forthcoming when they were needed. They came and they went at their will, and of the shires we are told that not one would so much as help another. Sometimes peace was bought by money, but the bargain was never kept. The invaders found the plundering of cities and the ransoming or selling of prisoners too profitable.

At Canterbury their expectations were in part disappointed by the steady resolution of the Archbishop Ælfheah (Alphege). He had, so (we are told) they said, promised them a ransom. When after some weeks they insisted on its being paid, he replied that he had sinned in making the promise. He would pay nothing, and he would allow no one else to pay anything for his life. His captors pelted him with bones and then clove his skull with an axe (A.D. 1012).

Murder of Ælf-
heah (Al-
phege). A.D.
1012.

Some eighty or ninety years later the Norman bishops of English sees betrayed their want of faith by asking Anselm, who then sat in Ælfheah's seat, whether a man was a real martyr who died only to prevent others from being compelled to pay an unjust tribute. Anselm's true perception of the Christian spirit was shown in his reply, that Ælfheah was a martyr "because he died for justice, and justice is of the essence of Christ, even though His name be not mentioned." Like Dunstan, Ælfheah was reckoned among the saints of the church. Unlike Dunstan, he belongs also to the great company of merciful men whose names should be had in everlasting remembrance.

Character of
Ælfheah. of

Conversion of
Thurkill, the
Dane.

The Danish leader Thurkill had tried to save archbishop's life. It is not unlikely that the spirit of self-sacrifice and love exhibited in the life and death of the primate may have determined him to abjure heathenism for Christianity. At the same time he resolved also to transfer his allegiance from Swend to Æthelred. Bringing with him forty-five ships, he pledged himself to defend England against his enemies; and for nearly as long as Æthelred lived the pledge was faithfully kept.

Savages
Swend. A.D.
1013.

It may have been in great part for the purpose of punishing Thurkill for his desertion that Swend in the following year (1013) sailed up the Humber, and addressed himself to the Danish portion of the population. His appeal was one which they could not or would not resist. They received him as their king, and then, crossing the border of the pure English land, he harried it with the merciless fury of a savage.

March of Swend
to Bath.

He experienced no serious check until he reached Bath.



archbishop Ælfheah had been murdered, stood out boldly for Æthelred, who took refuge on board his ship. From Greenwich the deposed king escaped to the Isle of Wight, whence he made his way to the court of his father-in-law, the Norman duke, leaving Thurkill and Swend to levy taxes or ravage the land as they would.

But the career of Swend was fast drawing to a close. Death of Swend. Æthelred landed in Normandy in the second week in January, 1014. Early in February Swend died, and, if we may believe Danish writers, he died professedly a Christian. From English chroniclers we gather no other proof of his Christianity than his denial of the title of saint to the East Anglian king Edmund, who had been slain by Danes, and whose body rested in the minster of the city which bears his name.

The story, as they relate it, tells us that Swend Story of his Death. vowed dire vengeance on the monks of St. Edmund's Bury, if they failed to pay the tribute which he imposed on them, and that he had mounted his horse to carry out his threat, when he saw Edmund himself hurrying towards him in full armour and with his lance raised. No other eye beheld the vision, which made him cry out in terror, "Help, fellow-soldiers! Saint Edmund is come to slay me." The martyred king ran him through with his spear, and in a few hours Swend died in great agony. The tale, it is clear, grew up from the tradition that the Danish chief died suddenly just when he had expressed his intention of punishing the monks of St. Edmund's minster.

CHAPTER XX.

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN EDMUND IRONSIDE
AND CNUT.

Election of Cnut. **Recall of Æthelred. A.D. 1014.** ON the death of Swend the crews of the Danish ships chose his son Cnut, who was then at Gainsborough as their king. His English subjects, holding Swend's death absolved them from their allegiance, resolved on the recall of Æthelred. Their message to him was that no lord could be dearer to them than he who was their kin-lord, if he would only treat them better than he had done before. Æthelred promised amendment, and to some extent he kept his promise.

Flight of Cnut to Sandwich. Cnut was making ready for a plundering expedition in which he was to be joined by the men of Lindsey in Lincolnshire; but Æthelred was quicker in his movements. Cnut was driven to his ships after a few days, which must have been during the last week of the year.



In the history of this most miserable time almost every step seems marked by murder. In a meeting of the Witan held at Oxford, Eadric Streone slew Sigefirth and Morcar, two of the chief Thanes of what are called the Seven Boroughs, these boroughs being York and Chester, together with the Fife-burghers or people of the five boroughs of Leicester, Stamford, Derby, Nottingham, and Lincoln. Æthelred's share in the crime is shown in his confiscation of the property of the murdered men, and by his order for the imprisonment of Sigefirth's widow at Malmesbury. But at this point he was perhaps surprised by the resistance of Edmund, his son, and probably the eldest surviving son of his first marriage.

Edmund had seen the widow, and, having resolved on making her his wife, he followed her to Malmesbury, and married her against his father's will. His demand of the estates of Sigefirth was refused, and, seizing both his estates and those of Morcar, he received the allegiance of the Fife-burghers, and thus became in some sort an independent prince (A.D. 1015).

He had soon plenty of work to do. Cnut, who had gone to Denmark and returned with a fleet splendidly equipped, was ravaging the shires of Somerset, Dorset, and Wilts. Edmund did what he could to raise a force to meet him. Eadric Streone, his brother-in-law, professed to do the same; but when the armies joined, he made various attempts to murder Edmund, and then, having gained over the crews of forty Danish ships, which must have belonged to Thurkill's fleet, he openly went over to Cnut. Thus far we may perhaps give credit to the story of his treasons. But that Edmund should after this admit him to his friendship and to a momentous

Murder of Sigefirth and Morcar by Eadric Streone.

Marriage of Edmund (Ironside) with the Widow of Sigefirth.

Renewed Treachery of Eadric Streone.

trust is not merely a riddle or enigma ; it is, even on the supposition that Edmund was mad, an impossibility.

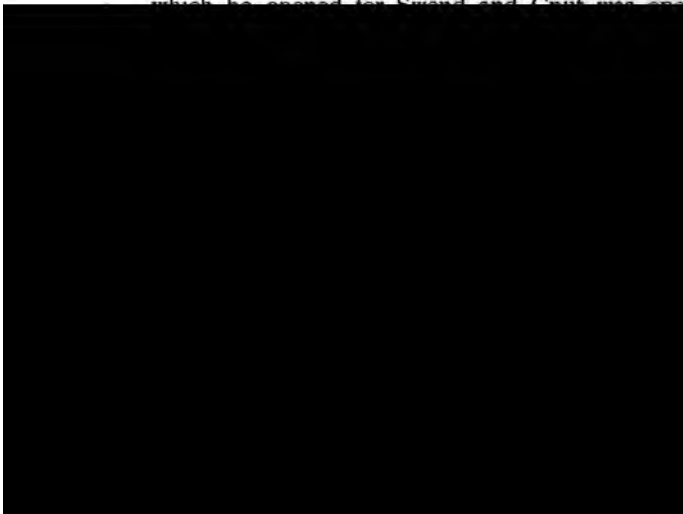
Death of Æthelred. A.D. 1016.

Wessex now submitted to the invader, and Æthelred smitten with his last sickness, busied himself not with preparations for resistance, but with putting down plots which he pretended to have discovered against his own person. Cnut at last advanced against London, but at Southampton received tidings of Æthelred's death (1016).

Consequences of the Misgovernment of Æthelred.

There had never been in any true sense of the word an English nation ; but such growth as might have welded the English people into a nation was effectually checked and repressed by the shameful misgovernment of Æthelred's long reign of thirty-seven years. He had scarcely passed beyond the threshold of middle age, and he bequeathed to his people a legacy of wretchedness which overwhelmed his heroic son, and familiarised them with the practice of exchanging one master for another. The

which he opened for Sweyn and Cnut was a



The first task of Cnut was to besiege London ; but his assaults were successfully repelled by the citizens, and he marched westwards against Edmund, who encountered and defeated him at the Pens or high ground bordering on the forest of Selwood. The issue of the second battle, fought at Sherstone, in Wiltshire, was more doubtful. Here Eadric, fighting on the Danish side, slew a man whose features were much like those of Edmund, and held up his head as that of the king in sight of the English ranks. For a moment they wavered ; but Edmund, taking off his helmet and showing his face to his men, hurled his spear at Eadric, but unhappily missed his aim. Though the battle was drawn, Cnut was virtually defeated. He retreated from the field during the night, and again laid siege to London.

**Battles of Pen
Selwood and
Sherstone.**

CHAPTER XXI.

DEATH OF EDMUND IRONSIDE.

It is at this point that Florence, the Worcester monk, who was at this time not yet born, places the reconciliation of the traitor Eadric with the king whom he had repeatedly betrayed, and whom he had attempted to smite with the assassin's dagger. It is quite possible that the issues of the battles of Pen Selwood and of Sherstone may have warned Eadric that Cnut was playing a losing game. But although Eadric may have wished to change sides once more, it is significant that the chronicle has no statement that he succeeded in doing so at the time and place assigned by Florence of Worcester.

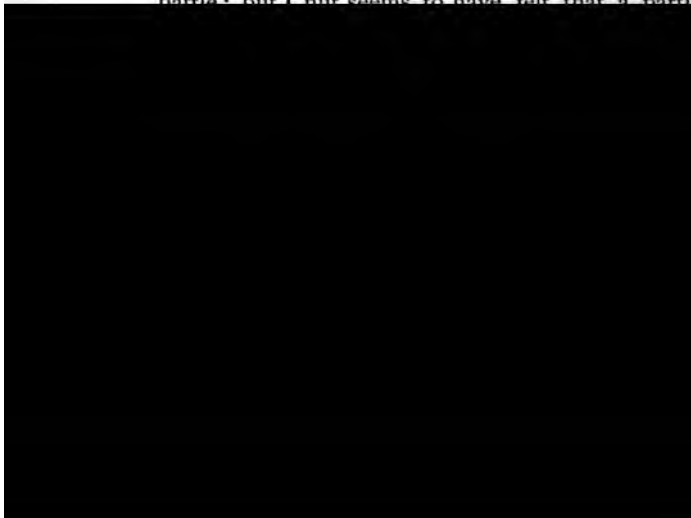
**History of Flor-
ence of Wor-
cester.**

**Battles of Brent-
ford and Ot-
ford.**

Edmund's third battle drove the Danes from walls of London to their ships. His fourth battle fought at Brentford, ended in a victory impaired by the loss of many of his men, who were drowned trying to cross the river. It is after this fight that the chronicle for the first time speaks of Eadric as going to meet the king at Aylesford; the comment being simply that no measure could be more ill advised than Edmund's victory in his fifth battle at Otford is said to have been rendered useless by the devices of Eadric, who saved the Danish army from utter destruction. But it is at the least possible that Edmund may have been unable to accomplish more.

**Battle of Assan-
dun.**

In his sixth battle, fought at Assandun, the defeat of the English is said to have been insured by Eadric, who, at the head of the troops gathered from his earldom, went over to the enemy just as they were beginning to give way. Probably the rout was so disastrous and overwhelming as it is represented to have been. Edmund prepared for a seventh battle; but Canute seems to have felt that a parti-



Within a few weeks Edmund Ironside lay dead in London; and the claims which might be urged in favour of his brothers or his sons were set aside, in part perhaps by the provisions of the treaty of Olney, but formally by the deliberate decision of the Witan, whether acting under constraint or not. Cnut, king already of the Mercians and Northumbrians, became king also of Wessex and East Anglia (A.D. 1017), and the sceptre passed from English hands to those of the Danish chief who had first trodden English soil as a pirate, and who was charged with having gained the English throne by secret murder.

Death of Edmund Ironside. Election of Cnut. A.D. 1017.

There is no actual evidence to prove that Edmund of the Iron Side died a violent death. The ceaseless anxiety and Herculean toil of the last seven months had been enough to shatter the frame and destroy the strength of the stoutest of the sons of men. But the sudden collapse of such mighty energy, just when a continuance of it was most needed, naturally suggested to his followers and friends that he had met with foul play; and the crime was necessarily ascribed to Eadric.

Suspicion as to the Cause of Edmund's Death.

Fancy, fed by wrath, soon invented terrible details for the tragedy; but, so far as we can see, English suspicions did not travel on from Eadric to Cnut. It is from Danish writers only that we hear of Cnut as employing Eadric in a work, of which assuredly Cnut reaped the whole benefit; and certainly we cannot plead in his favour that his conduct after Edmund's death was such as to vindicate his innocence in the eyes of the world.

Reports of Danish Writers.

Whether Edmund's excellence as a king and statesman would, if he had lived, have equalled his renown as a warrior, we cannot say. There was little or nothing in his opposition to his father to justify an

Burial of Edmund's Body at Glastonbury.

unfavourable judgment. Whoever withstood Æthelstan was more likely to be right than wrong; Edmund's brief reign left him no time for any matter except those which were involved in preparation for the battlefield. As it was, he passed away, leaving behind him a name as splendid as that of his father, which was shameful; and his body, borne to the minster of Glastonbury, was laid not far from that of his namesake and predecessor, Edmund the Magnificent, who with his father Æthelstan won the day at Brunanburh (p. 68).

CHAPTER XXII.

CONDITION AND HABITS OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

**Character and
Life of the
Early English
Settlers.**

FROM what has been already said in the preceding chapters, some notion may be formed of the character of the first German settlers in Britain, and of their descendants. We have seen something of their



children, of brothers and sisters. They had an in-born capacity for self-government, and an inborn hatred of tyranny and oppression. They knew nothing of service to any master except one whom they had chosen for themselves, or of obedience to any laws except those which they had themselves had a voice in passing. They were thus pre-eminently a people with a power of growth. Their progress might be slow. They might seem to grope their way and often to lose it; but when improvement comes from below, and spreads outwards and upwards, it is more sure and permanent than any which is merely forced on a people by their rulers.

We have seen something of this upward growth of the English people (p. 23), of their ideas of property, of their land tenure, and of the framework which they devised for their own government (p. 26); and from this we can form some notion of their mode of life in the country and in the town. Our chief business is to learn to know the past as it really was, and the men of the past as they really were. The history of a nation is the history of the daily life of the persons who make up the nation, of their wishes and their wants, of their privations and their comforts, of the abundance or the scantiness of their resources, of the happiness or the misery of their homes. By comparison with these, the policy of statesmen and the exploits of warriors have little interest or value; and indeed they have none, except in so far as the records of them help us to know how the people lived and suffered, and how far their lot was one of prosperity or of wretchedness, of growth in good or of lapse into evil.

But when we come to details, when we wish to picture to ourselves accurately the aspect of the land

The Life of the
English People.

General Condi-
tion of the
Country.

which they inhabited, and of the houses or huts which they lived, their occupations and their amusements, their manners and personal habits, we undertake a task which cannot be mastered without years of study, and for which, in order to master the whole of it thoroughly, the leisure of a long life is scarcely sufficient.

Roads and By-ways.

In all countries, except those in which the people are mere savages, the lapse of ages will change many things. But with us the revolution wrought in the conditions of our life even during the present century is so vast, that it is hard for any whose memories go back only for ten or twenty years to picture to themselves the England of the days of George I. nor was it altogether easy for the contemporaries of George III. to form an exact idea of the England of the time of Queen Elizabeth. In the reign of George III. the journey from Aberdeen or Edinburgh to London had been reduced from weeks to days ; it now became a matter of a few hours. A century

in the days of the Plantagenets. Then we could have seen nothing more than collections of a few hundred houses surrounded by a palisade or a wall.

We are accustomed to the sight of huge sailing ships able to carry hundreds of men, or of steamers which, against wind and tide, can convey thousands in ease and even in luxury from one end of the world to the other. Then by the side of some marshy lagoon, instead of the splendid docks or noble quays of our own time, we might have seen a few boats or barges in which the merchant seaman plied his trade, or some half-decked warships, which would seem to us insignificant by the side of the smallest of our gunboats.

Old English
Shipping.

Now practically the whole country has the appearance of a garden, in which may be seen stretches of park-land with gigantic trees rising from sward always soft and green, and casting their shadows upon sumptuous palaces guarded by battlemented towers or bastions. But in the days of Æthelstan and of Alfred, and still more in those of Æthelbert, who welcomed Augustine to Canterbury, the greater part of the land was covered by dense forests or reedy swamps. Rich tracts of pasture and meadow in our midland counties were then vast inland seas, from which the higher eminences rose as islands, like the isle of Ely, which served as a camp of refuge for Hereward and his followers in the days of William the Conqueror.

General Aspect
of the Coun-
try.

CHAPTER XXIII.


OLD ENGLISH HOUSES AND HOME LIFE.

**Elizabethan
Mansions.**

For magnificence and splendour, no private abodes of any period have surpassed the princely mansions of the Elizabethan age. But when we turn from such homes as those of Longleat and Montacute to the house of a king or of a powerful noble in the time of the earliest sovereigns of Wessex or Northumbria, we find ourselves in an abode which must for us be singularly cheerless and unattractive.

**Arrangements
of old English
Houses.**

The readers of Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe" will be familiar with the striking picture which he draws of Cedric the Englishman in his great dining-hall, with its raised dais for the table at which sat the master and his guests, looking down on the humbler board where the retainers and servants were gathered. But although here in the time of Richard I. the house and its furniture had the benefit of the advance



glass as they had being reserved for the church or the chapel. From a stone hearth in the middle of the hall the smoke curled up to a hole in the roof above. This one room served for meals by day, and as a resting-place for the men by night, the women sleeping in a building provided for them in the courtyard.

The mansion of a rich Englishman of the seventh century is thus a collection of separate huts, each containing one or at most two rooms, the whole group being fenced round with a wooden palisade surrounded by a moat. Some chairs, benches, and tables constitute the whole furniture of the hall. The women's bower has further some chests for holding plate and linen, and here are the spinning-wheels and other appliances for the tasks which furnish the clothing of the household. The kitchen held the brewing vats and the mills in which women slaves ground the corn. Near it was the forge at which was done all such blacksmith's work as might be needed.

In short, things were so arranged that the house might, so far as was possible, supply the wants of all its inmates for food or for clothing,—a sure sign of the absence of general trade or of anything like a division of labour for the production of wealth. For Englishmen of the present day the nearest approach to such a condition of things would be found perhaps in the remotest backwoods of Canada or the United States; but even here our modern civilization intrudes itself, and the whistle of the railway engine is heard in the forests or along the prairie almost as soon as the first settlers have cleared a space for their log hut or shanty.

English Man-
sions of the
Seventh Cen-
tury.

Differences be-
tween the
Conditions of
Ancient and
Modern Life.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FEUDALISM, AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

Old English
Slavery.

BETWEEN the home of an Englishman now, and the abode of an Englishman a thousand years ago, there are other differences which are even less pleasant. In the courtyard fronting the house stood the stocks and the whipping-post for the punishment of refractory slaves or of importunate vagrants and beggars. They do not represent the thought of any penalties except such as were inflicted by public law ; but from the days of Henry I. onwards slavery was in England a recognised and established usage.

Increase in the
Number of
Slaves.

The earliest Teutonic invaders may possibly have brought slaves with them. If they did not, they soon obtained plenty in the multitude of their Welsh captives. Freeman, again, were reduced to slavery by legal sentence for various offences ; and for the rest, the children followed the condition

selling of them to heathen masters, they attached no definite penalties to the offence, and their condemnation went for nothing. The voice of Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester (1062-1095), was more powerful. The saintly English prelate fearlessly denounced the most intolerable wrong that one man can inflict upon another.

But practically all the horrors of slavery were endured in equal intensity by the greater part of the population of England. The largest of the classes comprised in the English commonwealth was that of the degraded ceorls, or churls, who could not quit the land on which they were born, or free themselves from the master to whom that land belonged. But even this condition of villenage was mitigated gradually by Christian influence and teaching, and by the opportunities of winning enfranchisement furnished to them by the law. The institution of villenage died away in the course of ages; but no enactment ever formally decreed its abolition.

Villenage.

The relation of the villein to his lord brings us to the subject of feudalism, which is commonly supposed to have been introduced into this country by the Norman conqueror. The statement is true only if we take the word as denoting the system in its maturity and completeness. In germ and in principle it existed among Englishmen and Saxons, probably before they crossed the seas from the mouths of the Oder and the Elbe. In its essence it is nothing more than the faith which is pledged by the vassal to his lord on condition that the lord keeps his faith with the vassal. The violation of this faith on either side was declared by Alfred to be an inexpressible offence; and the desperate resolution with which it was maintained led often to the most bloody and disastrous catastrophes.

Feudalism.

**things and
Hundreds.**

The same principle, which, so far as the state was concerned, made one man responsible for the conduct of another, was shown generally in the whole English polity. The institution of tithings, ascribed to Alfred, either subdivided the hundred, or was an association of ten neighbouring families, the members of which were responsible for the behaviour of each one of their members. If one of them, having committed an offence, fled, the penalty for his deed was assessed on the tithing to which he belonged. Nor was the idea which lay at the root of compurgation essentially different.

compurgation.

Among the modes in which a criminal was allowed to vindicate his innocence was the process by which he declared solemnly that he was not guilty, and brought forward a body of compurgators who asserted their belief in the integrity of his oath. This declaration, or compurgation, they made not from their acquaintance with the circumstances of the case, but simply from their knowledge or opinion of his general character.

flood-gates of corruption ; and between the commission of a crime and the infliction of the punishment it interposed delays which made many shrink from seeking redress at the hands of the law as a hopeless and impracticable task.

This tendency to corruption was increased by the fact that a part, if not the whole, of the fine went to the judge, or lord of the court. Hence money might be used either to hasten or to hinder his action, or to prevent it altogether, while the substitution of the lesser penalty in cases of murder furnished an excuse for the deadly feuds, which, set on foot by the avenger of blood, led to the commission of a series of murders extending often over many generations.

Results of this
System.

Lastly, this principle which lay at the root of feudalism, of compurgation, and of villenage, and which made each unit in the commonwealth—be it the mark, the tithing, the hundred, or the shire—virtually an independent community, tended to check the growth which alone could convert an aggregate of tribes, more or less jealous of each other, into a coherent and organized whole. Hence before the Norman conquest we have an English people, but not, in strictness of speech, an English nation.

Hindrances to
National
Union.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE REIGN OF CNUT (CANUTE).

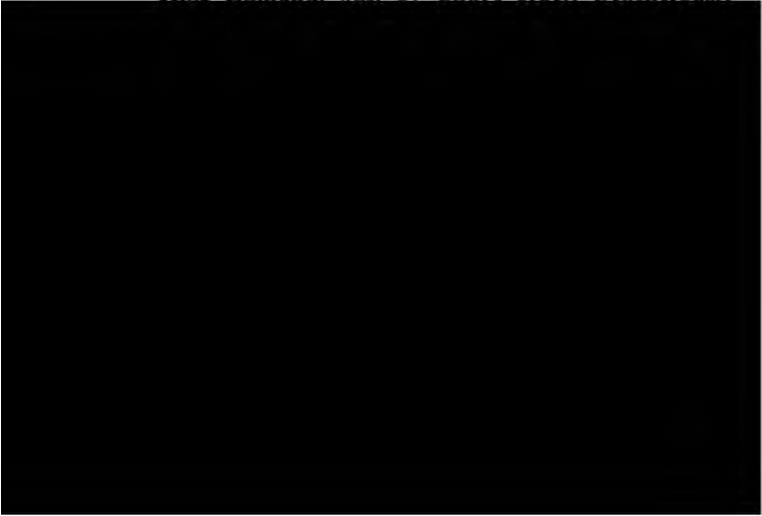
THE reign of Cnut as king of all England was on the whole a season of peace not unlike that which the country had enjoyed in the days of Eadgar. We could scarcely have stronger proof of Cnut's ability as

Condition of
England
under Cnut.

a ruler than that which is furnished by this fact alone. Had he been the mere pirate or marauder, had his one purpose been the extortion of money or the torturing of his subjects, the result must have been constant restlessness and tumult, and a general lapse of the kingdom into a worse state than that in which he found it. But whatever change there was, was decidedly a change for the better, and this in spite of many acts of violence and even crime on the part of the king against some of the most prominent among his people.

Crimes of Cnut
as King.

Cnut felt that his first task must be to guard himself against competitors for his throne. Æthelred and Edmund Ironside had both left children behind them. The two sons of the latter were mere infants; but Cnut, resolved to be rid of them, sent them to his half-brother Olaf, king of Sweden, to be put to death. Olaf, shrinking from the deed, sent them on to Stephen, king of Hungary, by whom they were carefully nurtured. The Ætheling Eadwig, brother of King Edmund, was, by Cnut's order, treacherously



but Emma bargained that the succession should be confined to her sons and his, if there should be any such. They had one son, Harthacnut (Hardicanute); and he too became king.

But Cnut was not yet at rest. He did not stick at murder, when murder seemed the only way of attaining his ends; but he was perhaps better pleased to work his will under shelter of the forms of justice. From the Gemot which assembled in London at the Christmas of 1017 he obtained a sentence of death against many prominent men, who were accused perhaps (although the fact is not stated) of plotting against the king. Otherwise it seems hard to account for a series of judicial murders in all the instances mentioned except that of the veteran traitor Eadric.

Gemot of London. A.D. 1017.

Whatever may be the difficulties in this man's history, there is no doubt that he fully deserved any punishment which might be inflicted on him. The tale last told of him is that when Eadric at this Christmas Gemot boasted of his exploits and his services, Cnut, turning to Eric, whom he had made Earl of Northumberland, said, "Let him get what he has earned, that he may not betray me as he betrayed Æthelred and Edmund," and that thereon Eric cut him down.

Death of Eadric Streone.

The title of Earl now displaced that of Ældorman for the governor whether of a sub-kingdom or of any shire of a kingdom, and also of the four great Earldoms, into which England was divided. Cnut reserved to himself the administration not of East Anglia or Northumberland, where a large proportion of the people was Danish, nor yet of Mercia, but of the purely English Wessex. It is clear that Cnut looked on himself simply as continuing the ancient line of the English kings, and that he was steadily

English Earldoms.

resolved on keeping out of sight everything which might remind his subjects that they were ruled by a foreigner.

**Levy of
Dane-geld.
A.D. 1018.**

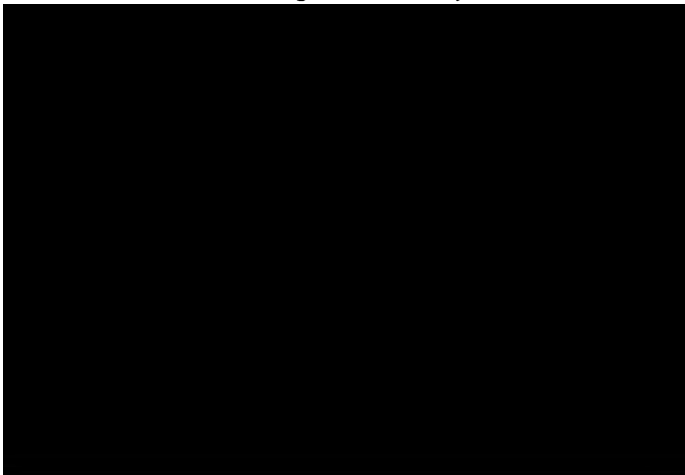
The following year (1018) was marked by the payment of a heavy Dane-geld, the importance of London being shown by the fact that the sum levied on the city was one-seventh of the sum demanded from the whole country. Cnut now paid his fleet, and sent to Denmark all the ships except forty, the crews of which were made to form a force known as the *king's* *Thingamen* or *Housecarls*. They served as a body-guard, and were not without points of likeness to a standing army.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE REIGN OF CNUT (CONTINUED).

**The Laws of
King Eadgar.**

MORE significant, perhaps, than Cnut's choice of Wessex for his own abode, was the demand made on the Gemot, gathered this year at Oxford, for



more particularly for a rule which should go by law and not by the chance will of one man. But it seems strange to find the Danish portion of Cnut's subjects joining in this cry as eagerly as the English. It is not unlikely that the Danes may have been even alarmed by the English leanings of their king, who had chosen Wessex as the seat of his power, and seemed more ready to listen to English than to Danish counsellors. They would, therefore, naturally think not of Æthelred, of whom all his subjects had equal reason for being ashamed, but of his father Eadgar, who so long as he was king kept the land in peace, and showed himself specially the friend of the Danes (p. 73).

Cnut, it must be frankly admitted, felt the justice of the demand, and ruled henceforth in accordance with its spirit. For the seventeen years of his reign England had a respite from invasions, rebellions, and tumults. If Cnut was unjust or severe, it was to his Danish, not to his English subjects; and it is certain that the memory which he left in Denmark is in strange contrast with the better name which he won in this country.

Reputation of
Cnut in Eng-
land and in
Denmark.

He had been king here five years before he revisited his native land. His return was followed, we are told, by an expedition against the Wends, in which an Englishman named Godwine did special service. Starting by night, without Cnut's knowledge, he stormed the Wendish camp; and Cnut, alarmed in the morning by Godwine's absence, which he set down to treachery, hurried up only to find the enemy destroyed, and the Englishman master of all their spoil.

First Appearance of Godwine.

Whether the story be true or not, Godwine from this time remains the foremost man in Cnut's

Godwine made
Earl of Wes-
sex. A.D. 1035.

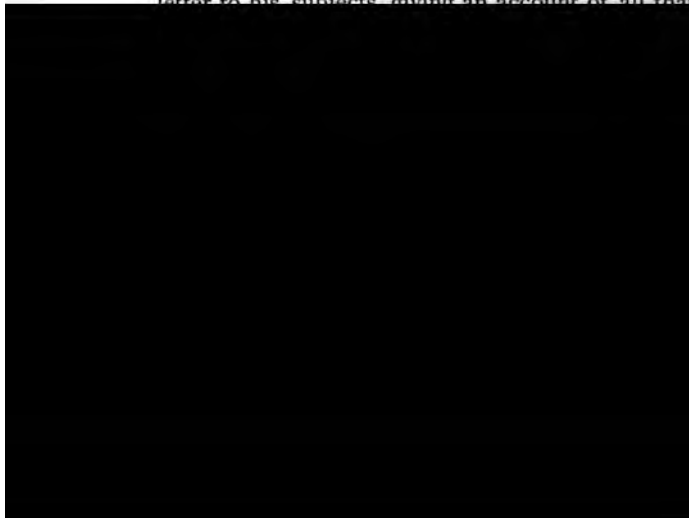
kingdom. Who or what he was by birth, it is impossible to say, and it is not worth while to examine a number of inconsistent stories. But it is certain that he married Gytha, the sister of the Danish Earl Ulf, who had introduced him to Canute, and that, in 1020, Cnut made him Earl, or Vice-king, of Wessex.

**Later Years of
Cnut.**

For the rest of Cnut's reign it is his highest praise that there is little or nothing to be said of it. The people were ready to dwell not so much on the darker acts of his life as on stories which related the rebuke of the courtiers who declared their belief in his power to rule the tides. Their affection grew warmer for the king who could order his chair to be placed on the shore, and when the waves came and wetted his feet, could read the bystander a lesson of the humility needed in the highest as in the lowliest of men.

**Pilgrimage of
Cnut to Rome.
A.D. 1027.**

Seven or eight years before his death, Cnut made a pilgrimage to Rome, from which he addressed a letter to his subjects, giving an account of all that



beyond doubt true, that with all his failings and sins he was, as a ruler, worthy of being ranked with the best among the kings who had reigned over Englishmen.

CHAPTER XXVII.

REIGNS OF HAROLD AND OF HARTHACNUT.

CNUT died at Shaftesbury towards the close of the year 1035. He had expressed a wish that Harthacnut (his son by Emma), who was absent in Denmark, should succeed him on his English throne; and this arrangement was supported by Earl Godwine and the West Saxons. Whether Cnut had any definite scheme for the division of his vast empire, we cannot say; but London, Mercia, and Northumbria declared for his son Harold (Harefoot), probably on the ground that under Harthacnut Denmark and Norway were likely to become mere dependencies of England, whereas they were resolved to have a king such as Swend had been during the few days or weeks that he reigned after the deposition of Æthelred.

Death of Cnut.
A. D. 1035.

A Witenagemot, held to decide the matter, resolved on a division of the kingdom. Harthacnut was to reign to the south, and Harold to the north of the Thames. But as the former was in Denmark, engaged in a struggle with the Norwegian king, his mother and Godwine acted in his stead.

Division of the
Land between
the Sons of
Cnut.

He had not been king many months, when the Ætheling Ælfred, the son of Æthelred and Emma, landed in England, accompanied perhaps by his brother Edward, in the hope of obtaining the crown of his half-brother. All that is known with certainty

Murder of the
Ætheling Æl-
fred.

about the matter is that Ælfred was seized, and he was put to death by Harold, with the approva was said, or with the help of Earl Godwine.

Acquittal of Godwine of all Share in the Crime.

Four years later Godwine was tried on the cha and was formally and solemnly acquitted. acquittal, we can scarcely doubt, was just ; but i necessary to bear in mind what the case really Ælfred entered the kingdom as a pretender to crown, and therefore as the disturber of a set government ; and in almost all ages and countries punishment for such an offence has been death. England, so late as the last century, the punishr legally involved the infliction of tortures quite horrible as those with which Harold is said to h slain his half-brother.

Probable Action of Godwine.

If, then, Godwine had arrested Ælfred, he wo have done no more than his plain duty. If he acted as his executioner, he would not have g beyond the law ; but it is more likely that he inten to take his part, and therefore went to see him, that when the young prince was seized by

while, Harthacnut, having come to terms with his Norwegian enemy, was resolved to strike a blow for the crown which he had lost, and for this purpose he joined his mother Emma, who, being banished from England, had taken refuge with Baldwin of Flanders, the father of Matilda, the future wife of William the Conqueror. Here he got together a large fleet; but before he could sail he received the tidings of his brother's death, and learnt that by the choice of the Witan he was king of all England.

Within two years (June 1042) Harthacnut himself died, the chronicler tells us, "as he at his drink stood." His reign was as miserable as his end. His subjects were oppressed by a singularly heavy assessment for Dane-geld—a tax which English and Danes alike had thought would be ended with the sovereignty of Cnut over both Denmark and England. The tax was levied by the Housecarls, two of whom were murdered at Worcester. Urged on, it is said, by Ælfric, the Archbishop of York, Harold ordered the burning of the town and the slaughtering of the inhabitants. All the great earls were sent against the city; but they contrived that the people should escape massacre, although they lost their houses and their goods in the flames.

Even before the burial of Harold, the Witan unanimously chose as their king the Ætheling Edward, son of Æthelred and Emma. The election of the Danish Swend Estrithson, the nephew of Cnut, would have been, we can scarcely doubt, more in the interests of the kingdom; but the two last reigns had sickened the people of Danish kings, and no one perhaps cared to remember that the son of Edmund Ironside was now grown up to man's estate far away in Hungary. Of him they had no personal know-

Death of Harthacnut, A.D. 1042.

Election of Edward, Son of Æthelred and Emma.

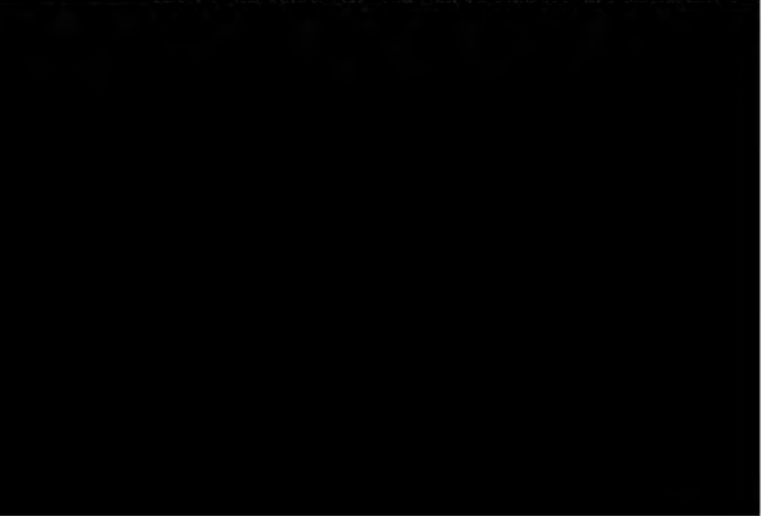
ledge ; and of our modern notions of primogeniture they had not the least notion. If a man belonged to the royal stock, this was enough ; and Edward not only fulfilled this condition, but was near at hand to enter on his work as king.

**Education and
Life of Ed-
ward in Nor-
mandy.**

If we are tempted to judge Edward too harshly for the follies of a miserable life, we must remember that he had ceased to be an Englishman, and that he must have been gifted with more than usual stedfastness if he had remained one. Driven from England with his mother, the Norman Emma, when he was still a child only nine years old, he spent nearly thirty years in the Norman court, and then came back to England to all intents and purposes a Frenchman. Nor was this all. He came back intolerant of everything English, hating English manners and modes of life, hating the English language, and hating the lot which forced him away from that contemplative life for which alone he had in truth any fitness.

**His Character
and Tastes.**

Essentially his character was much like that of his father, indolent for the most part, but liable to



feet, but dwelt earnestly on the duties which men owe to them. Such a thought as this never entered Edward's mind. He would pass from his meditations and prayers to the field, in which the tortures of beasts or birds offered him the keenest physical delight of which his cold and sluggish nature was capable. If in the prosecution of this amusement he was thwarted or opposed, he could give utterance to very unsaintly words. A churl, we are told, resented a trespass on his land; and Edward at once cried out with such rage as he could feel, "By God and his mother, I will hurt you some day if I can." Probably Anselm would have had no kindlier greeting had he shielded a stag or a fox in whose trail the Confessor was riding. The descriptions of his person leave no doubt that the king was what is called an albino.

Edward thus came to England, resolved to make his kingdom as nearly like Normandy as possible. To attain this end he could think of no better plan than that of filling the important posts of the state or of the church with his Norman friends. This practice was the cause of some unlooked-for disasters in his own time; it led directly to the enterprise of the Norman duke against the country after his death.

The man who, with a judgment which we must regard as mistaken and unfortunate, had secured Edward's election to the crown was Godwine, the great Wessex Earl, who was charged with caring little for bishops or monks, with doing nothing towards the founding of any monastic houses, with caring too much for the aggrandisement of himself and his family, but who also won the praise of a rigid administrator of justice, and the fame of an orator whose speeches could make a marvellous impression on the free assemblies of the Witan. The success, and in no less degree the failure, of his

His Norman
Friends.

Share of God-
wine in his
Election.


eloquence, furnish conclusive proof of the growth the English constitution in and before the eleventh century. The Norman conquest wrought in respect a marked and long-enduring change for worse.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR AND THE HOUSE OF GODWINE.

Swegen, the
Eldest Son of
Godwine.

OF Godwine's sons the eldest was Swegen (Swey) who received an earldom at the beginning of the Confessor's reign. The second was Harold (afterwards king), who was appointed Earl of the West-Saxons, probably in 1045, and who soon won himself a great reputation both as a soldier and statesman. Without rising to the highest standard of generalship, he was a born leader of men, capable of discerning at a glance the special difficulties of an enterprise and of adapting himself to the circumstances.



language and adopt the ways and habits of provincials (pages 19, 20) of the Roman empire.

Seven years after his appointment to the earldom of East Anglia, Harold became Earl of the West Saxons, and virtual ruler of the kingdom. The house of Godwine was strengthening its foundations rapidly. Eadgyth (Edith), Godwine's only daughter, became the wife of the king, and the Lady of the land (1045); and for a time it seemed that Edward would yield permanently to the influences thus brought to bear upon him. For his own mother he had but little liking, and he had shown her but little indulgence. For some reason not clearly specified, but probably because she refused to contribute in due measure to the needs of the state, her son seized her treasure and occupied her lands, leaving her a bare maintenance, on which he charged her to live at Winchester (1043).

Harold, Earl of
the West
Saxons.

The fortunes of the house of Godwine were overshadowed first by the misdoings of his eldest son Swegen. Returning from a victorious expedition against the Welsh, he desired to marry the abbess of Leominster. Thwarted in this plan, he went first to Flanders, then to Denmark; but returning three years later, in 1049, he made his peace with the king, and would have obtained restitution of his forfeited lands, if not of his earldom, had he not been opposed by his brother Harold and his cousin Beorn, to whom these lands had been granted.

Exile and Re-
turn
of
Swegen.

In this instance Harold was neither conciliatory nor merciful. It was not pleasant perhaps to yield up territory of which he had become possessed; but it was no kindly act to drive to desperation a brother at whose hands he himself had suffered no wrong. A wretched tragedy was the result. Under pretence of

Murder of Beorn
by Swegen.

employing him as his intercessor with the king. Swegen decoyed Beorn to the seashore, and, when he refused to go on board his ship, had him seized, and carried him to Dartmouth, and there murdered him.

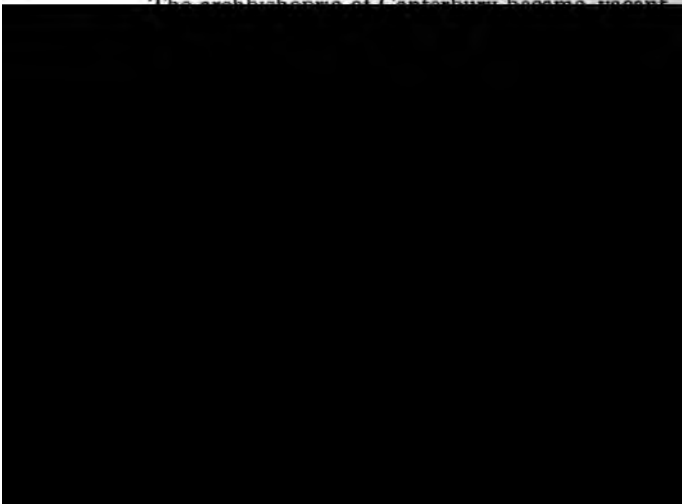
**Restoration of
Swegen.**

Swegen again fled to Flanders; but the treacherous slaying of Beorn was counted a less crime than the offence for which he had incurred his first banishment. To explain the fact that after this more flagrant offence bishop Ealdred could cross the sea, bring back Swegen, and win the restoration of his earldom, it has been urged that he may have been influenced by peculiar circumstances in the case unknown to us. But by no possibility can any circumstances alter the nature of the murder brought about by a series of lies, and not deliberately plotted and executed.

**Norman Favour-
ites of the
King.**

In truth, the hands of all the actors in the history of this time seem to be sadly besmirched. There is disunion and strife everywhere, and the king, with an absurd, or rather wicked, fondness for every traitor, Norman, is doing his best to heap fuel on the fire.

The archbishop of Canterbury became vacant.



CHAPTER XXIX.

BANISHMENT OF GODWINE AND HIS SONS.

THE materials for an outburst were ready, and only a spark was needed to kindle them into flame. The foreign favourites of Edward supplied a blazing firebrand. His brother-in-law Eustace, Count of Boulogne, father of Godfrey, the future king of Jerusalem, was journeying from Canterbury to Dover, after a visit paid to the English court (A.D. 1051). Some time before they reached Dover,—a town belonging to Godwine's earldom and devoted to his interests,—he and his men put on their armour.

Eustace of Boulogne at Dover.
A.D. 1051.

They expected probably to find free quarters there, or they intended to take them. The citizens, accustomed to English law and to Godwine's firm and just administration, failed to see that they were bound to furnish them. One Englishman, withstanding the forcible entry of a Frenchman, who drew his sword and wounded him, smote down and slew the intruder, and was himself slain by the foreigners, who rode through the streets, cutting and slaughtering as they went.

Massacre of the French at Dover.

In utter amazement at the effrontery of men who dared to look on their houses and their goods as their own, Eustace hastened back to the king and complained of acts which, to him, seemed past understanding. The recital roused in Edward the worst passions of his father Æthelred. Forgetting his duties as an English king, as a citizen and a Christian, he summoned Godwine from the wedding feast of his third son Tostig, who had married Judith, daughter or kinswoman of Baldwin of Flanders, and straightway

The King's Commission to Godwine.

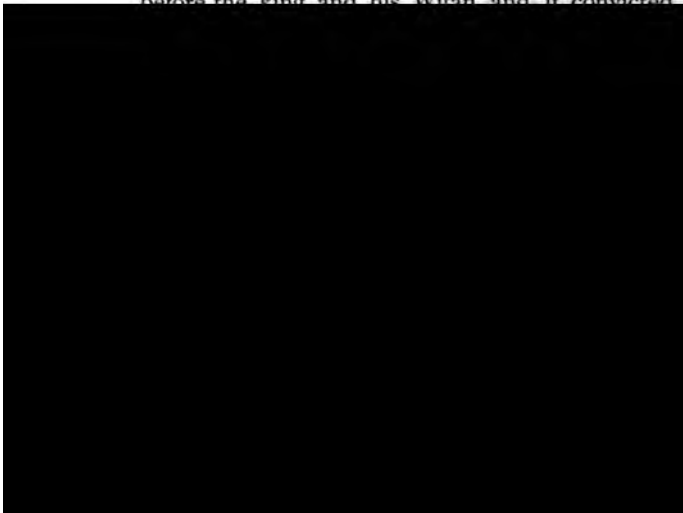
charged the earl to punish the men of Dover with f and sword.

The Nature of
this Commis-
sion.

Edward possibly expected no resistance from a man who had taken some part in punishing the people of Worcester for the murdering of Harthacnut's housecarls (page 113). But these housecarls were acting by the authority of the king, and were levying a tax imposed by the Witan, whereas Eustace and his followers were acting simply as burglars, although their deed may have been done in open day. The demands which they made on the men of Dover were utterly illegal, and they were guilty of the murder of every man whom they had slain.

Godwine re-
fuses to obey.

The two cases were therefore entirely different, and Godwine flatly refused to obey Edward's shameful and iniquitous order. All crimes might, he urged, be tried in a court of justice; they could be tried nowhere else. If Eustace had a charge against the people of Dover, let the magistrates of the town be summoned to answer for themselves and the citizens before the king and his Witan, and if convicted,



at Beverstone in Gloucestershire. Thus supported, Godwine, offering to clear himself again by compurgation (page 104) of the crime of which he had been already acquitted, demanded the surrender of Eustace and his men, under threat, we cannot doubt, of war in case of refusal.

The demand was, nevertheless, refused; and war seemed inevitable, when Leofric, the old Earl of Mercia, bidding them remember that the slaughtering of Englishmen by each other would only leave the country at the mercy of its enemies, prevailed on the two parties to give hostages, the one to the other, and to refer the quarrel to the judgment of a future Gemot.

Mediation of
Earl Leofric.

The first act of this Gemot, which was held in London, September 1051, was to renew the outlawry of Swegen. This act was simply iniquitous. Swegen had committed no new offence since Edward had restored him to his earldom; and the Gemot was not assembled to try offences which had been condoned or forgiven. If, however, he was punished really for supporting his father at Beverstone, then the sentence was not less a condemnation of Godwine than of his son.

Gemot of 1051.

As such Godwine regarded it; and he was fully justified in so doing, if, as the story goes, he received the mocking message that the king would be satisfied only when Godwine brought him his murdered brother Ælfred safe and sound. He refused to appear before the king unless hostages were granted to him for his safe conduct and that of his sons; and, if these were granted, they would even then appear with nothing less than the usual retinue of earls.

Godwine's Con-
ditions.

The demand was rejected, and Godwine and his wife Gytha, with their sons, Swegen, Tostig, and

Exile of God-
wine and his
Sons.

Gyrth, betook themselves to Flanders, the usual place of refuge for English exiles. But Godwine, it is told, had specially intimate relations with the king, and perhaps have hoped that Baldwin's mediation might be not without use in bringing about a reconciliation with king Edward. Harold's purposes were of a different kind. He was resolved on righting himself by force, and with his brother Leofwine he spent the winter among the Danish settlements in Ireland, in the palace of Dermot, king of Dublin and Leinster.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE FORTUNES OF GODWINE AND HIS SONS DURING THEIR EXILE.

Norman Influence in England. FOR the moment the triumph of the foreign favour of Edward seemed complete. A Norman con-



The Norman duke was eagerly welcomed by his cousin Edward; and it is not unlikely that during his stay in England he received from him some sort of promise that he should succeed to the English crown. Such a promise was, indeed, wholly out of the range of the powers intrusted to any English king; but William and the Normans whom he found flourishing here knew nothing probably of the forms or the spirit of the English constitution; and if Edward knew them better, he had no more regard for them than they had. It is certain that from this time William made the acquisition of the English crown the first object of his life, and he seized every opportunity of proclaiming himself as heir for a multitude of reasons, amongst which a direct promise from Edward held a prominent place.

Alleged Promises of the King to William.

No English authority writing at this time notices the fact of any such promise; but neither do they speak of the promise made by Harold himself fourteen years later to William. As they deny a long series of Norman falsehoods, their silence is rather a proof that these two promises were made.

Evidence for these Promises.

But the question is one which may for us be settled in a few words. If the promises were made, both Edward and Harold did what they had no right to do. If an unrighteous promise cannot morally bind the man who makes it, still less can it bind others whose rights and liberties may be endangered or lost by it. Neither of them could bind the nation; and the nation had full power to cast aside their illegal engagements as in themselves invalid and worthless.

Value of these Promises.


But even while William's Norman friends were exulting in the thoroughness with which the foundations of Norman ascendancy seemed to have been

Change of Feeling in Favour of Godwine.

laid, a change was close at hand. The absence of Godwine soon taught the people that his banishment meant virtually their own subjection to a foreign yoke; and men began to exclaim that they would rather share his exile than remain in the land from which he had been driven. The measures taken by the king to prevent his landing only added strength to the indignation with which they beheld the triumphant inroads of Griffith, king of North Wales, into territory which Godwine or Harold would have defended effectually.

Harold at Porlock.

Godwine's entreaties for a peaceful reconciliation and his offers of compurgation were all rejected; and like Harold, he resolved now on the appeal to force. But at first they acted independently. Harold made his way from Ireland to Porlock, a little bay close under Dunkery Beacon, the highest point of Exmoor on the northern coast of Somerset. Here he encountered a resistance which compelled him to fight. The result of the battle was a victory, which cost thirty thanes their lives; and Harold then departed



cheerful and zealous. But even now Godwine would avoid violence, if he could by any means do so ; and he rejoiced when his proposal for an interchange of hostages and for the reference of all matters to a lawful and free Gemot was accepted.

Its acceptance was a warning to Edward's favourites that their condemnation, if they remained, was sure. Robert the archbishop, and the other Normans who had been thrust into English sees or high offices of state, had no mind to risk their lives by lingering within reach of their enemies. The archbishop, cutting and slaying, we are told, as he went along, forced his way, with the bishop of Dorchester, through the east gate of the city, and succeeded in escaping across the Channel in a crazy vessel.

Flight of the
King's Nor-
man Favour-
ites.

CHAPTER XXXI.

RESTORATION OF GODWINE AND HIS HOUSE.

THE issue of the Gemot was not doubtful. Godwine and his sons were restored to their possessions and honours, and a decree of outlawry was passed against the archbishop and the most prominent of Edward's Norman favourites. It would have been wiser, perhaps, to insist on the punishment of all. As it was, a large body of Norman intruders remained in the land, and worked on patiently in the interests of Duke William.

Results of the
Restoration
of Godwine.

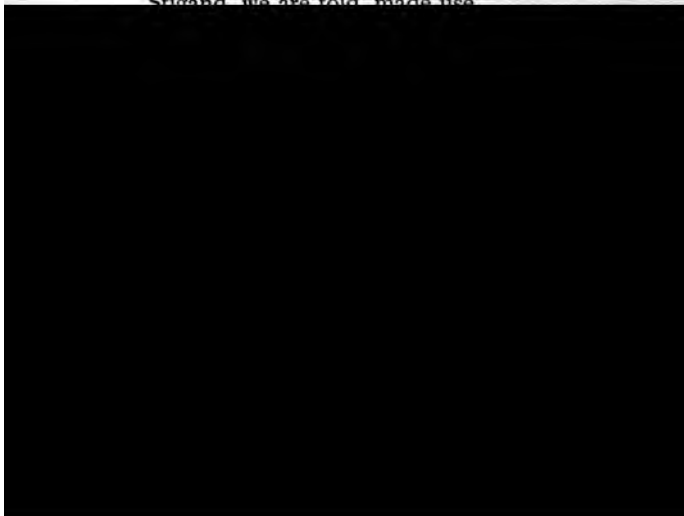
The house of Godwine was once more the first in England. Yielding, and yielding unwillingly, to an irresistible necessity, Edward went through the form of personal reconciliation with Godwine, and received

Power of the
House of God-
wine.

him with the kiss of peace. With scarcely a reluctance he submitted to the recall of his wife from the monastery of Wherwell; but for his brothers-in-law he had a warmer welcome. Personally they had done him no wrong, and he had felt something of a friendship for them before the day of their outlawry. All were there except Swegen, who had departed on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and who died on his homeward journey.

Promotion of
Stigand to
the Arch-
bishopric of
Canterbury.

Stigand, bishop of Winchester, was now appointed to the archbishopric of Canterbury by an act of king and the Witan. Nothing more, they held, was needed to give validity to his election; but Robert still lived to proclaim his wrongs, and William of Normandy eagerly availed himself of the defiance which, as he insisted, had been done to the canon law. The promotion of Stigand was added to the long catalogue of reasons which justified his claim on the crown of England. In the hurry of his flight Robert had left behind him his pallium, of which Stigand, we are told, made use.



year, and his recent troubles may have added to the pressure of age. Soon after his restoration he fell sick; but he continued to work on until the coming of king Edward to keep the Easter festival at Winchester. Here, according to the simple tale of the English chronicler, Godwine and his sons, Harold, Tostig, and Gyrth, were dining with the king, when Godwine fell from his seat, and was carried by his sons to the king's bower or room. He never spoke again, and died after lying insensible for three days. His body was buried in the great church of Winchester.

The circumstances of his death were striking and startling, although he had been long ill. It is not, therefore, wonderful that the fancy of his enemies soon busied itself with dressing up the tale into a story of Divine judgment for his crimes. The first beginnings of the process are seen in the expressions used by Florence of Worcester (page 82); but when William of Malmesbury wrote, perhaps half a century later, one account given of the event was that Godwine and the king were talking about the murder of the Ætheling Ælfred, when Godwine, complaining of the persistency of the king's suspicions, expressed a wish that the morsel which he was about to eat might choke him if he was not absolutely guiltless of all share in his death. He is, of course, choked, and dies on the spot, instead of living on for three days.

Later Stories
about his
Death.

But in this form the story was felt to be lame and unsatisfactory. Why, of all subjects, should the king and Godwine choose the death of Ælfred to talk about at dinner-time, instead of carefully avoiding all reference to it, as we might suppose that they naturally would do? To get rid of this difficulty, the tale was made to

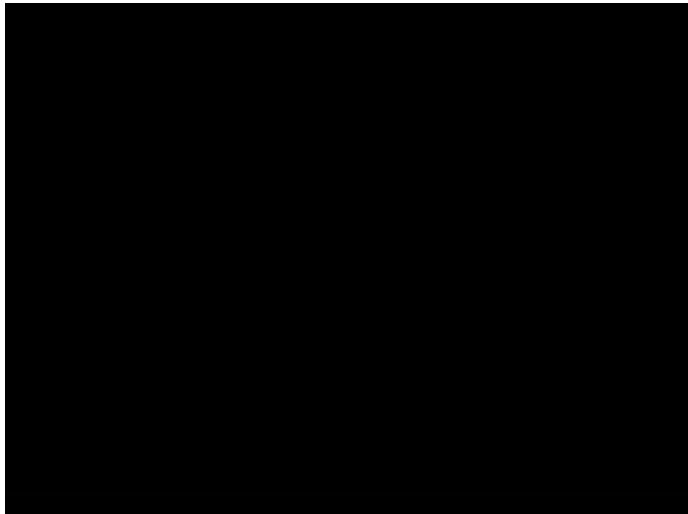
Growth of these
Stories.

turn on the remark of a cupbearer, who, slipping with one foot and recovering himself with the other, cried out, "So brother helps brother." Edward immediately exclaims, "So might my brother Ælfred have helped me, if it had not been for Godwine and treason." Then follows Godwine's protestation of innocence, the ordeal, and the catastrophe. The king then says, "Drag out this dog, and bury him by the highway;" and the inference is that the burial in the minster took place in defiance of the king's order and without his knowledge.

Value of the
later Tales.

With these slanderous falsehoods we have to do precisely as we have dealt with the stories of the massacre of St. Brice. In each case we are not likely to get at the truth by going to the chroniclers or historians who wrote at the time when the events of which they speak took place.

CHAPTER XXXII.



The step thus taken was one of great importance. It was a declaration that the claims of the Norman duke were not to be entertained or even thought of, and it shut the door against those claims more effectually than the choice of any man not of the royal line could possibly have done. The Ætheling may have been practically no more of an Englishman than the Confessor was. He may not even have been able to speak English; but at any rate he was not a Frenchman, and there was nothing to fear from the side of Hungary or Germany.

Importance of
this invita-
tion.

Against him, also, the Norman duke had no ground of complaint. If he laid stress on some promise of the king, real or supposed, he did so on the ground that on the Confessor's death no one then living in England could be found who belonged to the royal house at all. The children of the Ironside king were probably forgotten; but they were the lineal representatives of Cerdic, and they were the sons of a crowned king and his wife. He could not therefore dispute the right of the English people to choose the Ætheling as their ruler; and against the Ætheling all the charges of perjury, of faithlessness to his lord, of treason, which he skilfully put together for the ruin of Harold, would be scattered like morning mist in sunshine.

Position of the
Ætheling.

The invitation was sent (1054); but three years passed before the Ætheling, with his wife, his son Edgar, and his other children, landed in England (1057); and after he had come, he never saw the king. Many guesses have been made to explain a fact which at first sight seems strange. If any underhand means were used to prevent the king from welcoming him in person, they were used by those of his Norman favourites who had been allowed to remain about him.

Return of the
Ætheling to
England. 1054.

Death of the
Ætheling.
1067.

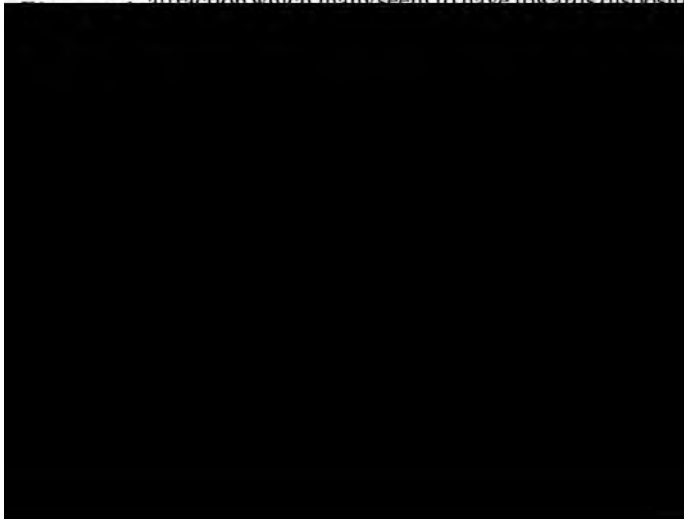
But it seems that the Ætheling was ill before landed, and his illness ended almost immediately his death. The event left Harold again in position of the only Englishman whom the W could with prudence choose as the Confess successor; but it also left the Norman William to spin the subtle web of falsehoods and fallacies which he hoped to win the crown which the W destined for Harold.

Tostig, Earl of
Northumber-
land.

Two years before the Ætheling's death, Harold's younger brother Tostig had been appointed to earldom of Northumberland (1055). This was probably the act of Edward as much as that of Witan. Of all the family of Godwine Tostig was one for whom, most of all, Edward had a personal liking; and the demands which he made for Tostig's presence and society were probably one main cause of the troubles which led to tumults in his earldom and to the banishment of the earl.

Friendship be-
tween the

Their friendship can be explained only by the attraction which many seem to have towards disposi-



such as that which had shared the country between Cnut and Edmund Ironside. It was their policy which left Harold to meet the Norman William with the army of Wessex alone; and to them directly and almost exclusively was due the catastrophe of Senlac. Their infamous career is a significant comment on the want of cohesion shown by the English people before the Norman conquest.

As Tostig lost ground in the opinion of his countrymen, Harold was winning more and more their affection and their reverence. A campaign conducted with great military skill against the Welsh king Gryffith showed that he possessed all but the highest powers of generalship. The Welsh chief was dislodged from fastness after fastness, and was at last murdered by his wearied subjects. Harold married his widow, Ealdgyth, the sister of the earls Eadwine and Morkere. The union seems to have been one of mere policy, which was designed to secure the interest of the two brothers in the election which must take place on the death of the Confessor.

Rise of Harold
to Power.

This event was hastened, if it was not brought about, by the troubles in Northumbria. Edward was now more than sixty years old, and he lacked the strength, and perhaps the desire, to shake off the illness which had seized him. His life had been marked by a series of incidents which attested his prophetic and miraculous powers, as well as his piety and his devotion. At the hallowing of the church of St. John, at Clavering, he had given the ring from his finger to an aged beggar who asked for alms. Within a few hours the ring was given to some English pilgrims in Palestine by a man who avowed himself to be the Evangelist and Apostle John, and who charged them to go and tell king

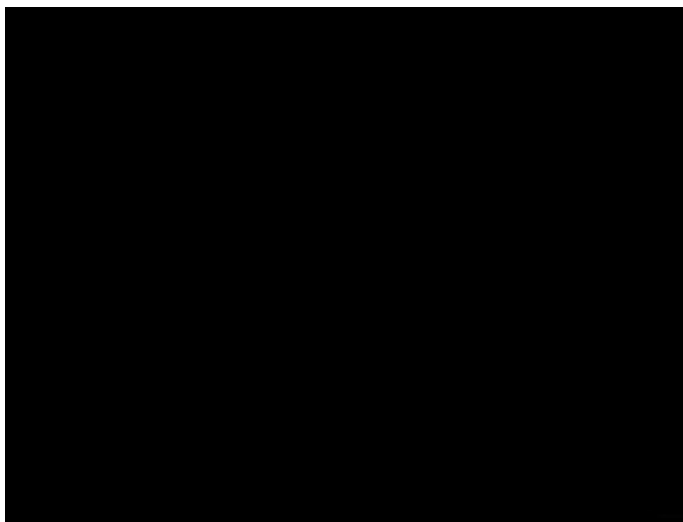
Illness of the
King.

Edward that within six months he should enter his rest in Paradise.

Death of Edward. Jan. 5, 1066.

One thing only Edward was anxious to accomplish before his death, and this was the consecration of the great church which he had built for the monks of his house at Westminster,—the church in which he purposed that his own body should be laid, and which he designed to be the place of hallowing and sepulture for the line of English kings who might come after him. The church was consecrated on the festival of the Holy Innocents, December 28th, 1065. On the eve of the Epiphany, January 5th, 1066, Edward breathed his last; and the next day, within the walls of his new minster church, his body was laid to rest. Harold, elected by the free and unanimous choice of the Witan, was crowned king of England

CHAPTER XXXIII.



churchmen of the kingdom were ministers of the fiend, that the whole land was one mass of corruption, and that by way of chastisement it should within a year be harried and ravaged by demons from end to end.

To this Edward, according to his biographer, added a prophecy which describes with some accuracy the course of English history to the reign of Henry I. These sentences, then, must have been added to the narrative in that reign ; but if he said anything which was afterwards twisted into a more convenient shape, the archbishop Stigand may with some reason have treated his talk as the ravings of a sick man's delirium.

Prophecy of
Edward.

If such mischief as he predicted was coming on the land, he had had the chief hand in bringing it about, by exciting in the mind of the Norman duke hopes of a prize which was not his to give away. He now declared that he committed his kingdom to his brother Harold. Some regret for the past may have prompted him to suggest the arrangement which he knew would alone satisfy the Witan.

Last Directions
of Edward.

The Witan lost no time in offering the crown to Harold, and Harold felt himself bound at once to accept it. The offer was unanimous. The Ætheling Edward was dead. His son Edgar, both by age and by his character, was not one who could be chosen to steer the vessel of the state through a stormy sea ; and, not being the son of a crowned king and his queen, he had, according to the ideas of the time, no claim whatever to the succession. As the royal stock thus failed, there was clearly no one else to whom it could be so fitly offered as to the son of Godwine.

Unanimity of
the Witan.


That the Norman duke professed to claim the crown by virtue of some promise made by Edward, was pretty generally known to Englishmen ; and even

Harold and the
Norman Duke.

before Harold's election rumours had probably got about that Harold himself was in some measure committed to William—that in some way or other he had, in the language of feudalism, become his man. Such an engagement could not have been made during William's visit to the English court, for Harold was then in exile, seeking the means for his restoration. But in the very year before Edward's death (1065), a strange chance had put Harold in William's power, and William had availed himself of it with singular subtlety.

Shipwreck of
Harold. 1066.

Harold was sailing along the English coast, landing here and there to enjoy the sport of hawking, when a storm carried him away and stranded his vessel on the lands of the lord of Ponthieu. Almost within the memory of living men, shipwrecks, instead of calling forth feelings and acts of the deepest pity and sympathy, were regarded as occasions for gaining wealth, at the cost, it might be, of murder. The practice of Harold's time was fearfully cruel and ferocious. The great English earl was thrown into



Ealdgyth, compliance with this demand was impossible. According to other tales, Harold received knighthood from William; and this would be made to involve some feudal relation between the two. Others made him accompany William on expeditions into Brittany, and fight in his quarrels as bravely as he had fought against Welsh chieftains in his own land.

More impressive than all was the oath which we are told that Harold was entrapped into taking, and by which he swore to acknowledge William's title to the English crown, and to do everything in his power to win it for him. Harold was made to lay his hand on a chest covered with a cloth, and, without knowing what lay beneath, to bind himself to a contract into which it was not competent for him to enter. When the oath was taken, the covering was removed, and he saw before him the relics and bones of some of the greatest saints of Christendom.

Story of Harold's Oath.

For us the question of Harold's obligation to keep such a promise is soon settled. No law of any land will hold a man bound to keep faith with a burglar who has pledged him to secrecy with a blunderbuss held to his ear. The whole business was a monstrous and a worthless mockery, and it was an insult of the grossest kind to the saints whose authority William professed to recognise. But William's baseness and cruelty, his deep and deliberate falsehood, become fully clear only when we remember that the oath, he knew, could not possibly be kept, and that he never meant that it should be kept.

Value of Harold's Promise.

Neither in this instance, nor in any of the challenges which he sent to Harold after his election as king, had William any idea that his proposals would be accepted or acted upon; but their rejection would answer his purpose quite as well. He could then

William's Charges against Harold.

proclaim Harold as a man faithless to his feudal lord and as a wilfully perjured traitor.

Conduct of the
Witan.

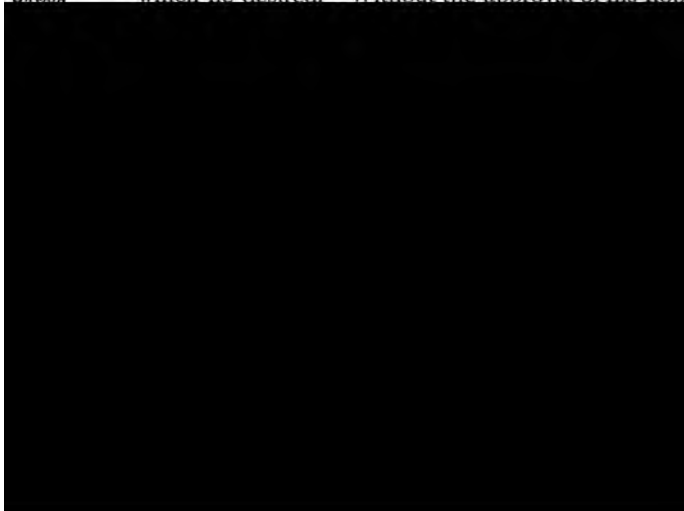
Harold may then at some time or other have made some sort of promise. The matter is one with which we have no concern; and the Witan showed by their unanimous act that they troubled themselves as little about it as we need to do.

William and
the Seneschal
Fitz-Osbern.

In spite of all this, the tidings of Harold's election and coronation came to William with the force of an unpleasant surprise. He was setting out on a hunt, but, breaking away from the company, he sat down in his hall and covered his face with his mantle. As the seneschal Fitz-Osbern talked with others about the news from England, William looked up and said that it was this news which had caused him a double grief—grief for the death of the king, grief for the wrong done to him by Harold. Fitz-Osbern replied that it was a time not for weeping but for action. He must wrest the crown from Harold's head.

Challenge of
William
Harold

William had brought the seneschal to the point which he desired. Without the approval of his nobles



The sanction of the Pope and his condemnation of Harold's falsehood would convert the struggle into a holy war.

William eagerly caught at the advice, and the issue was thus brought vastly more within the bounds of likelihood. But although William could make the Pope arbiter in his quarrel, without suffering for it in his own person, he really placed himself and his successors in a position which implied the supremacy of the Pontiff over all the sovereigns of the earth. The hand which held out to him the consecrated banner could, a few years later, press heavily on Henry IV., king of the Germans and of Italy.

Appeal of
William to
the Pope.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

DEFEAT OF TOSTIG AND HAROLD HARDRADA, AT STAMFORD BRIDGE.

THE storms which were gathering round Harold broke first in the North. From Flanders Tostig, on hearing of the king's death, had hastened to Duke William, and urged him to seize the English crown for himself. The task was wholly to William's mind, but he would only undertake it in his own way, and to the eagerness of the exile all delay was intolerable. Tostig, however, could get nothing more from William than his sanction for any attempts which he might make for the recovery of his earldom. Armed with this approval, he got together a considerable fleet and ravaged the English coast.

Intrigues of
Tostig.

Driven from Lindesey (page 90) by the earls Eadwine and Morkere, Tostig found a refuge

Tostig in Nor-
way.


first with the Scottish king and afterwards at the court of Harold Hardrada, king of Norway. Here, as at Rouen, he prayed first for aid which might restore him to his earldom. But this scheme had no attraction for the Norwegian chief, who, with all his love for war and delight in battle, saw the dangers of the enterprise, and the certainty that the whole profit of success would accrue to Tostig alone.

**Harold Hard-
rada, King of
Norway.**

Tostig now resolved to try the second argument with which he had already sought to impress the Norman duke. Harold, whose harshness and cruelty had won him the name of Hardrada, or Hardrede (as Æthelred's fitfulness had won him the title of On-rede, or Unready, page 75), could look back upon a strange series of astonishing exploits, which furnished themes for high-wrought rhapsodies of bards and minstrels.

**His Earlier
Career.**

He had served among the Varangian¹ or German guards of the Eastern Emperor at Constantinople, and he had had an eye to wealth not less than to glory. He had come back to his native land a stern



spend the rest of his days as king of England. Tostig had gone before him. They met again on the Tyne, and at first everything seemed to promise well for their success. Having burnt Scarborough, they sailed up the river, and, landing at Riccall, marched upon York.

Hastening to meet them, the earls Eadwine and Morkere underwent at Fulford a most severe defeat, which was followed by the surrender of York, September 24th, 1066. The citizens pledged themselves to yield hostages for their good faith to the Norwegian king at Stamford Bridge; but before they could be got together the English king came between them and the victors of Fulford, and the battle of Stamford Bridge closed the career both of Hardrada and Tostig.

Battle of Fulford.

The choice of Stamford Bridge as the spot for the delivery of the hostages seems at first perplexing. The hostages might have been given at York itself. But the explanation is probably to be found in the fact that Stamford Bridge is close to Aldby, the house or the stronghold of the old Northumbrian kings (page 41). The occupation of this ancient palace would appear to Tostig an earnest of the recovery of his earldom, and to Hardrada an assurance that he was himself the successor of the long line of Northumbrian sovereigns.

The Hostages at Stamford Bridge.

The story of the great battle is a saga or poem rather than a history. Nothing more can be regarded as certain than that the result of the fight at Fulford was reversed, and that both Tostig and his Norwegian ally were slain. Harold is described as seeing his namesake fall from his horse as he rode round his host, as asking who he might be, and as saying, when he learnt that it was Hardrada himself, that he was a

Story of Battle of Stamford Bridge.

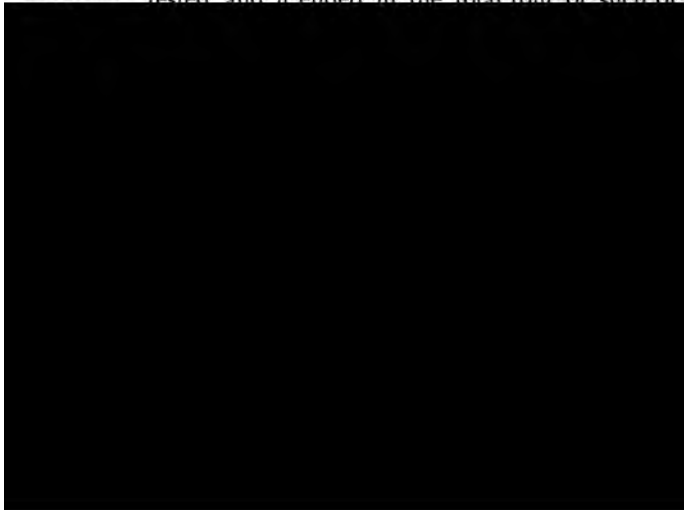
tall and goodly man, but that his luck had seemin
left him.

**Harold's Offer
to Tostig.**

Harold is next made to send a message to
brother, offering him not merely his old earldom,
the third of the kingdom, if he will only make per
"What gift have you," Tostig asks, "for Harold
Norway?" "Seven feet of ground," was the ans
"or, as he seems taller than other men, just so m
more as he may need." The messenger is no soo
departed than the Norwegian asks who he was, an
told that it was Harold of England himself. "V
did you not tell me this before?" was his reply ;
never, had I known it, should he have gone back
his host." The retort of Tostig is that he could
murder a brother who offered him not merely
pardon but his friendship ; and to this Hardr
vouchsafes no other remark than that the Eng
Harold was but a small man, but he stood well in
stirrups.

**Defeat of the
Norwegians.**

The battle was beyond doubt most severely c
tested, and it ended in the total rout of such of



of October; that on Thursday the 12th he left London, and in less than thirty-six hours had taken up his position on Friday at Senlac, where the battle was fought the next day, October 14th, 1066.

Of these dates two, those of the fight at Stamford Bridge, September 25th, and of the catastrophe at Senlac, are certain. The rest must remain more or less conjectural. Horsemen might without difficulty traverse the distance between York and London in five days, and between London and Senlac in two more. The two journeys together amount to two hundred and thirty five miles, at least; and it would be impossible for an army on foot to make two such marches in less than ten days, and even this would involve a very severe, and indeed most hurtful, strain. We must then suppose that the main body of his army followed Harold as best they could on the road to London, and that they started earlier and preceded him on the way from London to Senlac.

The burden laid on Harold may well be thought too heavy to be borne by mortal man. It was certainly too heavy to be borne long. He had known from the first that nothing but an appeal to the sword could decide the quarrel between himself and the Norman duke; and he had set himself to the task of guarding the southern shores of his kingdom with an energy which must have insured success had he not been interrupted and thwarted in his work.

For nearly four months his fleet kept the sea, and not a sign of any Norman ship was visible. It had always been a hard matter to keep a force of Englishmen long together; and although lapse of time only brought the coming of the enemy nearer, if he was to come at all, yet the need of gathering in their harvest proved too strong for them in the end, as it can

The March from
York to Sen-
lac.

Energy of Har-
old.

State of the
English Coast.

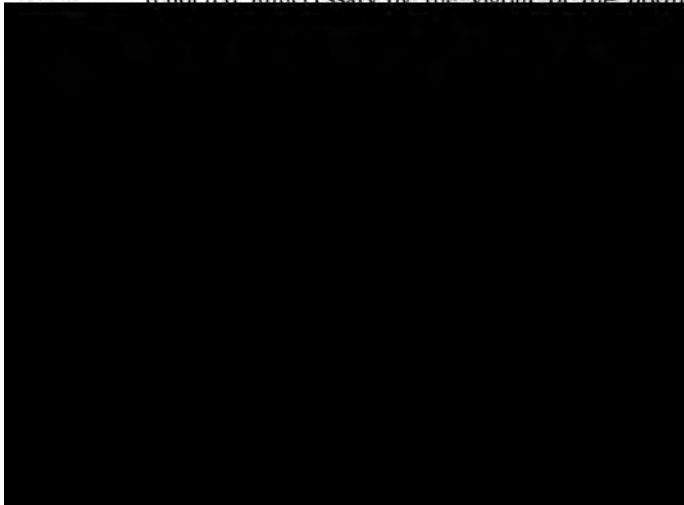
scarcely fail to prove too strong for any except a p
standing army. Early in September it became cl
that the men must go home. Sadly, and with d
forebodings, Harold rode back to London, while
fleet sailed up the Thames, with the loss of so
ships by the way.

Reasons for the
Absence of
the Fleet.

This miserable necessity left the southern co
unguarded. Perseverance for a few weeks m
might, and probably would, have rendered
Conqueror's enterprise altogether impracticable; b
it is of little use to ask why the women and child
of England could not undertake to gather in
harvest to the best of their power, while th
husbands and fathers remained at sea to guard th
country and their freedom. There was not as ye
living spirit of national union amongst Englishme
and the penalty for the lack of it was to be a hea
one indeed.

Treachorous
Conduct of
Eadwine and
Morkere.

From London Harold was soon summoned nor
wards to fight the battle which should have be
rendered unnecessary by the vigour of the north



CHAPTER XXXV.

THE MARCH OF HAROLD FROM YORK TO SENLAC.

MEANWHILE the Norman duke, having got all things into readiness in the early summer, was chafing at the calm or the contrary winds which kept himself and his army virtually prisoners on the southern side of the Channel. In his preparations for his great iniquity he had succeeded probably even beyond his hopes. He had won to his side the popular opinion of Christendom, and fastened on his enemy the reputation of a perjured cheat. He had received the blessing of the Pope, and a banner which hallowed his enterprise. He had roused the enthusiasm of his subjects for his mighty scheme of fraud and robbery, and he had drawn together under his standard, almost from every part of Europe, a vast crowd of men who sold their bodies, and were ready to sell their souls, for money.

Preparations of
the Norman
Duke.

His ships were ready early, perhaps, in August. For the most part they were little better than undecked barges, built to carry men and horses for a voyage from which there was to be no return. But pre-eminent among the larger and more carefully-finished vessels was the *Mora*, the gift of Matilda to her husband, on which the figure of a boy wrought in gold pointed with an ivory horn in the direction of the prow, and the prow was to be faced only towards England.

The Norman
Fleet.

Unhappily for Harold and the English, the prevalent wind of this summer was from the north. Had William been able to cross the Channel at once, he would have found the shores guarded by the fleet and

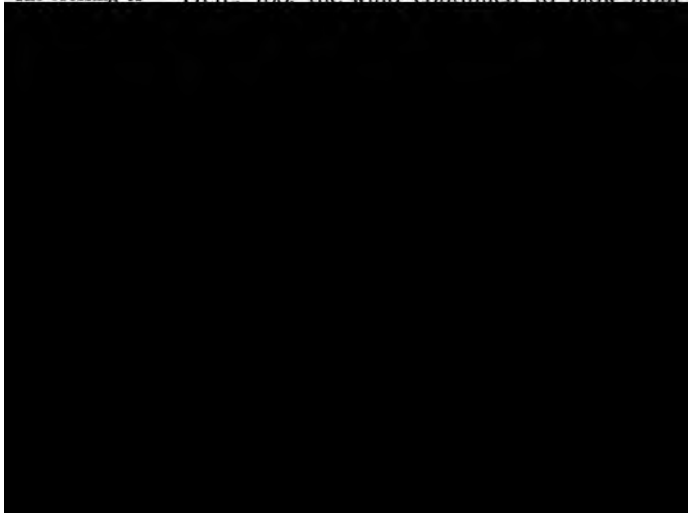
Delay in Sail-
ing.

army. But August went by, and at the end of first week in September the patience of the Eng was worn out, and they could not be withheld from going to their homes to gather in their corn. The land was left at the mercy of any invader, for the king was soon summoned away to the north to rid the country of the Norwegian host; and before he could return, the Norman duke had intrenched his camp at Hastings.

**The Fleet at
St. Valery.**

After the delay of a month at the mouth of the Dive, William transferred his fleet to St. Valery, the estuary of the Somme, in the territory of the Count of Ponthieu into whose hands Harold had fallen a year ago. The number both of his ships and of his troops is uncertain. Some speak of his army consisting of sixty thousand men; others reduce it to fourteen thousand. Whatever may have been its size it was excellently disciplined, and it consisted of professional soldiers to a far larger degree than the army of Harold.

The Crossing of the Channel. Here, too, the wind continued to blow from



with his hands upon the ground. With perfect readiness he turned into an omen of good an incident which might have dispirited his followers. "The earth of England is in my grasp," he cried; "I have taken seizin¹ of my kingdom." A soldier, it is said, plucked a handful of straw from the thatched roof of a cottage, and gave it to the duke as "seizin," not only of the country, but of all that it contained. "I accept it," he said, "and may God be with us."

Marching to Hastings on the next day, the feast of St. Michael, the army constructed a trenched and palisaded camp, and then went forth to ravage the country in the neighbourhood. William's object clearly was to fight as near the sea as possible, and therefore to tempt Harold down by merciless havoc wrought among his people, if indeed Harold should come back at all from his encounter with his Norwegian namesake.

Ravaging of the
Country round
Hastings.

For the moment William could not tell with which king he might have to fight; but probably not later than the 1st of October he received from a Norman, who held office under Harold as he had held it under Edward, not only the tidings that the Norwegian host had been utterly destroyed, but also the counsel to hasten back to Rouen instead of venturing to face an enemy whom he could not possibly withstand.

Tidings of Har-
old's Victory.

But Harold's victory at Stamford Bridge was the immediate cause of his defeat at Senlac. His absence enabled William to land without opposition, and he had, therefore, with an overworked and wearied army, to meet an enemy perfectly fresh and eager for battle. This mischance Harold ascribed to the will of Heaven,

William's Ad-
vantages.

¹ That which puts a lord into feudal possession of his land. The ceremony was called Livery of Seizin.

adding that he could not be everywhere at the same moment. But while, with unabated energy, he braced himself to the new task before him, he was made feel how nearly the issue must depend on him alone.

**Ingratitude and
Folly of the
Northern
Earls.**

The Northumbrian earls had, after their great feat at Fulford, won their safety through Harold's bravery and military skill. The terrible necessity which called him away to the south they regarded as a special reason for refusing to help him. They would now have a splendid opportunity for again dividing the kingdom. They had, as they said, quarrelled with the Norman duke, and he none wiser than them; and they were fools enough to fancy that they would be well content if they left him unmolested in the country to the south of the Thames.

**Harold at Wal-
tham.**

An interest as terrible as it is sad attaches to the last days of Harold's life. His toil had already been almost beyond human powers of endurance; but now there was to be not a moment of rest until his fall, and his enemies should be ever his enemies.



some means brought to an end. The question was what these means should be. His brave and noble-minded brother, Gyrth, urged that on every ground Harold should not fight in the battle to which he had challenged William, if such a battle was to be fought at all. He insisted, with even greater earnestness, that the whole country between London and the sea should be systematically ravaged, so that the invaders should be starved out of it, even if they escaped defeat in battle.

Harold, we are told, rejected his counsel on both points. Never through him should any Englishman suffer in lands or home. Never would he do anything to hurt those whom he desired only to see thriving under his sway; neither would he allow any to say that he had chosen the coward's part, and left his brother to face perils which he dared not meet himself.

Rejection of his Advice.

Yet, if the advice was given (and our knowledge of it comes from Norman sources only), Gyrth was on both points entirely right. It was childish folly to suppose that any could charge with cowardice a man whose career had been like that of Harold; and had Harold remained alive after the fight of Senlac, the defeat of the English would soon have been followed by irreparable disasters for the invaders. By following Gyrth's counsel he would have been playing the part not of the coward but of the really brave man,—of the man who is not afraid of the opinions of others; and as to the hurt or harm of his subjects, this would be caused not by destroying their crops or their houses, but by failing to place every possible obstacle in the way of the invaders.

Harold's Mistake.

Far greater than any losses which might be thus incurred were the miseries brought on the whole land

The Result of his Decision.

by the course which he took. But it is at the least possible that the advice was never given, and in any case all criticism, so far as Gyrth is concerned, is thrown away. All that we can say is, that if he gave it, he showed himself a greater general and a wiser statesman than his brother.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE BATTLE OF SENLAC.

Position of Harold.

It is certain that the battle of Senlac was fought on Saturday, the 14th of October. A distance of about seven miles separated the spot occupied by Harold from the Norman camp at Hastings. It was wisely chosen, not merely as barring the road of an enemy who might wish to march from Hastings to London, but also as involving great disadvantages in attack



not trained professionally, seem almost beyond belief; but it is possible that Harold may have ridden after his army, which had started from London a day, or perhaps two days, earlier.

On the eve of the fight fresh messages are said to have passed between the Norman and the English camps. The duke, we are told, demanded a simple resignation of the crown by Harold. If he could not obtain this, he would be content with the position of the old kings, who were overlords of England or of Britain, and Harold should be under-king of the Northumbrians. If neither of these courses should please him, he was ready to abide the issue of a single combat between himself and Harold.

Alleged Offers
of William.

If such proposals were made, they must have been made with the full knowledge that they could not be accepted. In any case they would serve their purpose, which was to impress on the world at large that his quarrel with Harold was strictly a personal one, and that with the English people he had nothing to do. It matters not whether Harold's blunt refusal of all these alternatives be historical or not. It is beyond question that he was not competent to entertain them.

Motives for
these Offers.

A few hours only remained before the great encounter. As the night came on, the English camp resounded, we are told, with national songs and ballads, and the shoutings of revellers over their cups, while in the camp of the Normans men were seen confessing their sins, and praying in ecstasies of devout enthusiasm.

The Norman
and English
Camps.

If we take this account as substantially correct, we have to remember that the English had no need to make the worse appear the better cause. They were there to fight for their country, their homes, and their

Conduct of the
English.

laws. They were thus simply doing their duty, : they might do it without excitement.

**Conduct of the
Normans.**

For the Normans it was, beyond all other thi needful to show that they were engaged in a religi work. If William's enterprise was not a crus sanctioned by the Vicar of Christ, it was n wickedness and sin, to be loathed by all decer minded men. But the same tale is told of English and French armies on the eve of the ba of Agincourt, only that there, naturally, the parts reversed, the English betaking themselves to pra the French to joyous revelry.

Plans of Harold.

The purpose of Harold was to fight strictly on defensive, and, if his orders had been obeyed, th can be little doubt that, in spite of all the disadv tages involved in the desertion and treachery of northern earls, the result of the battle must have b the ruin of William's schemes. So, indeed, Har told his men in the few quiet words which addressed to them before the battle.

**Harangue of
William.**

Before his Frenchmen William had paraded o more his own wrongs and the perjury of Harold, : hounded them on to the slaughter with the cry :



und on his coat of mail the forepart was by accident placed on his back. As ready now as when he fell from his ship's side in Pevensey Bay, he cried out that the turning of his hauberk portended only the turning of a duke into a king ; and, still more to cheer his troops, he declared that if he should be victorious he would build on the battle ground a splendid minster in honour of St. Martin.

With the papal banner floating before him, and with his brother Odo, the fierce mace-bearing bishop of Bayeux, by his side, William placed himself at the head of his Normans who formed the central body, charged with the work of breaking down the palisade and shield wall in front of the standard of the English. At the head of all went the minstrel, known as Taillefer, the cleaver of iron, brandishing his sword, and singing songs of Roland and the Paladins¹ of Charles the Great. Taillefer could fight as well as sing, and he had slain two Englishmen before he was himself cut down.

There can be little temptation to dwell on such fantastic exploits, and it is painful to linger over the details of this fearful battle. So long as Harold's orders were obeyed, the Norman attack was repulsed with terrible slaughter. Something like a panic struck the whole of William's army. The report went that the duke had been slain, and, tearing off his helmet, he rode, like Edmund Ironside at Sherstone (page 93), along his ranks, crying out, "I live, and by God's grace I will conquer."

¹ By this name are known the great peers or nobles of the palace (Palatium) or court of Charles the Great (Charlemagne). Of these peers Roland was the foremost, and his exploits were as wonderful as those of King Arthur. The stories of these two heroes are, in fact, at bottom the same.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE DEATH OF HAROLD.

Death of Har-
old's brothers,
Gyrth and
Leofwine.

THE second onset was fatal to Harold's brothers Gyrth and Leofwine; and so fell two devoted and pure-minded Englishmen, of whom their country might well be proud. But this attack also repulsed, and the event of the day could not much longer have remained doubtful, had not William ordered a portion of his army to feign a flight, which if the English should, as he hoped, pursue the other division was to press on and seize the ground thus left open.

Stratagem of
William.

The stratagem succeeded. The irregular English levies before whom the bait was held out were snared. They left the post assigned to them by the king, and learned soon that they had made a fatal blunder, which, in spite of the skill and bravery shown by them in their effort to retrieve it, was never repaired.

retreat as they had been in the fight, and there was no reason even now, except in the jealousies and divisions of Englishmen, why the Norman duke should not still be foiled in his plans of theft and murder. The treachery of Eadwine and Morkere had led to the disaster of Senlac; it was now to keep open for William the path which he had thus far hewn out for himself with his mace and sword.

So died an English king, whose name, whatever may have been his faults, deserves always to be mentioned with more than honour. He was great as a statesman, and great as a military leader; and in all his campaigns he showed himself second to none of the generals of his age. If, after his return from Stamford Bridge, it would have been more prudent to follow the course said to have been suggested by Gyrrh, we have still to remember that the battle of Senlac was lost only because the irregular levies on the left wing disobeyed the strict orders given to them.

Harold as a
Statesman
and a General.

If, again, Harold's conduct to Swegen (page 117) was not that of a generous brother, if his conduct at Porlock (page 124), although it was the usual conduct of all exiles at that time, was not what we might have looked for in such a man as Harold, he displayed through all the rest of his life a spirit which, if it had been shared by half the earls and thanes of the land, would have rendered the Norman conquest absolutely impossible.

Harold's purely
English Spirit.

The career of Harold was one which may well attract to him not merely our respect, but our love. That for such a man decisive victory over one invader should be followed immediately by decisive defeat from another, to whose evil deeds those of Hardrada were as nothing, is one of the numberless things in

The Close of his
Career.

**Submission of
Edgar at Berk-
hampstead.**

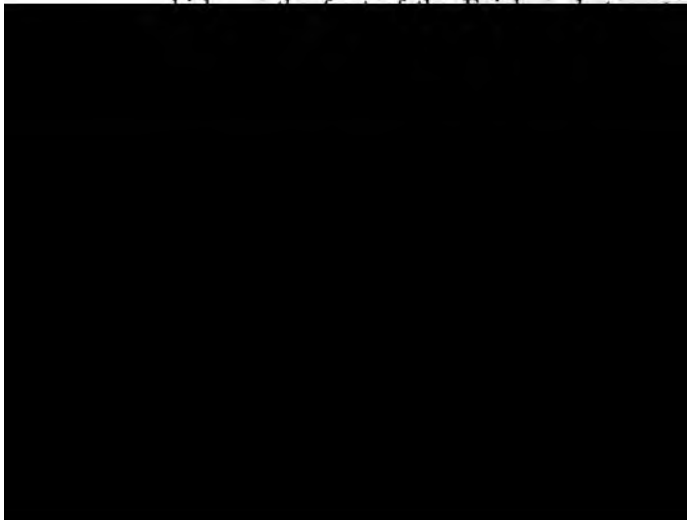
Marching by Wallingford, he made his way Berkhamstead, where he reaped still more abundantly the fruits of his victory. With the Archbishop of York and other bishops and thanes, Edgar, newly-elected king, came to declare himself the rival of the Conqueror. The back of their resistance had been broken by the desertion of the northern earls, and, according to English theory, the king-elect was not full king until he had been crowned. The rejection of Edgar, therefore, was no hindrance to the offer now made to William of the English crown.

**Acceptance of
the Crown by
William.**

After some hesitation, real or feigned, the crown was accepted; but William would not venture him into London until a fortress had been raised for defence. It was, no doubt, a structure of wood which soon disappeared; but on its site arose the present Tower of London.

**Coronation of
William. Dec.
25, 1066.**

On Christmas Day, 1066, the Witan was gathered in Westminster to ratify the election of the Norman duke, and to witness his coronation. The vo-



interfere. The fact seems to be sufficient proof that he himself had nothing to do with the outbreak. No attempt was made to help him, but much was done by the Norman soldiers in the way of plundering. The riot was, it would seem, simply a breach of military discipline; and William, we are told, warned his chiefs immediately afterwards that a repetition of such acts would drive the whole land into a rebellion, which it would be impossible for them to repress.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CONQUEST.

ALTHOUGH the work of the conquest was scarcely more than begun, William's election by the Witan and his coronation gave him great advantages. He was now in form king. For whatever he did he might claim the authority of his predecessors; and any resistance made to him might legally be regarded and treated as rebellion. For the same reason no formal changes were made in the laws; but the people were soon made to feel that they were administered in a different spirit, and to answer quite other purposes than those for which they were designed.

Position of
William as
King.

His position as the acknowledged king of the land was used in support of the feudal theory that the king is the owner of all the soil of his realm. He could scarcely venture to dispossess all English landowners on the strength of this theory alone; but he could, and he did, say that although he was the lawful successor of the Confessor, he was yet, when he urged his claim, met with armed resistance. Hence all

William and the
English Land-
owners.

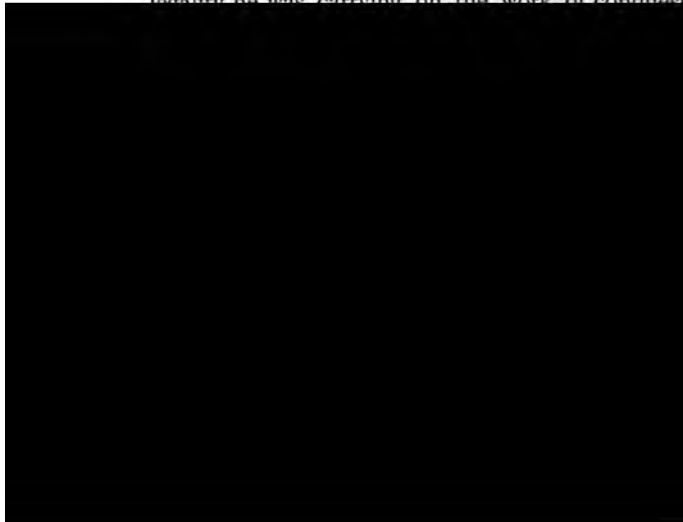
England was guilty of rebellion, and the penalty rebellion was forfeiture of land with the confiscation of all goods.

Forfeitures of Land.

This was a weapon which could not be used partially against all ; but it could be used against some and it might be drawn forth from the armoury whenever it might be convenient to do so. It could be employed against Harold and his house, and against his most prominent supporters and followers. They were left landless ; but the main body were allowed to redeem their estates, and the prices brought were sent to William's exchequer.

Growth of Feudalism.

But the land came to them strictly as new land granted by a new lord, under conditions indefinitely varying from those under which it had been held before. The feudal chain was thus firmly riveted round the English owners of land, and William found himself on the road to a regal power far exceeding that of any kings before him. Greatly to his delight, he discovered that by securing for each act the sanction of legality he was carrying on the work of conquest.



Lanfranc and the Pope, without caring to consider whether it might not involve serious difficulties and losses for men not so strong as himself, so now, without considering how it might affect his successors, he resolved to strengthen the foundations of his authority by building castles to command every town as each submitted, or was compelled to submit, to his arms. He had done so at Hastings, he had done so in London; and he adhered to this policy with thorough firmness.

But William desired beyond all things to revisit his Norman duchy, and he set out within three months after his coronation. Things, however, looked threatening in the north; and he therefore summoned the earls Eadwine, Morkere, and Waltheof, son of the Northumbrian earl Siward, to accompany him. A refusal would have been necessarily regarded as a first step in the path of overt rebellion, and hence they could do no otherwise than obey his summons.

William's reception in his ducal city was magnificent; but the splendour of his holiday was not allowed to interfere with the advancement of his interests or his business. Stigand, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was by his side; but he had secretly resolved that the primate, who had no canonical authority (page 126), should yield to one from whom he had already received invaluable help in his enterprise against Harold. Lanfranc, the prior of Bec, who had urged him to appeal to Christendom and the Pope as well as to his own people, should take his place, and bring the English clergy under the discipline to which, from the days of Dunstan (page 72), onwards, they had opposed a determined resistance.

From Normandy William was soon recalled by troubles in the land on which he had thrust himself

Return of
William to
Normandy.
1067.

Stigand and
Lanfranc.

Misgovernment
of Odo and
Fitz-Osbert.

as ruler. The burden of subjection was heavy enough while he remained in England. It became worse after he had left his brother Odo, and his seneschal William Fitz-Osbern (page 136), to rule for him in absence. The voice of the people was at once raised against their oppressiveness, and more especially against the castles which they multiplied, and which became the convenient strongholds of evildoers.

Risings in England.

If William was not actually guilty of these iniquities in his own person, he yet could avoid intrusting his authority to those who were ready to commit them. He was paying the penalty for framing and carrying out evil schemes, which began with fraud and falsehood and led him on gradually into tyranny. The storm broke first in Herefordshire and in Kent. The former Englishmen allied themselves with Welsh princes to levy war against the new-comer. In the latter they asked the aid of Eustace of Boulogne, the man whose name, as we might have supposed, would be most hateful in their ears (page 119). The former we have strictly a local war, for that

even then far more of an Englishman than was Edward.

During the years which had since passed Swend had shown friendship for England by refusing to aid Tostig in his treason, or the Norman William in his plans of theft and usurpation. He had no longer now anything to fear from Norway, and the yet unsubdued Northumbrians were ready to welcome him as their sovereign. He had, it seems, the will to help them; and had he resolved on striking the blow at once, it might have told with fatal effect on William's power. He held his hand for two years, and long before those years were ended the golden opportunity had passed away.

Position and
Aims of Swend.

Returning to England in December 1067, William kept the Christmas festival at Westminster, and then set himself to crush the resistance which had Exeter for its centre. Here sojourned now Gytha, the wife of Godwine and the mother of king Harold, and her presence roused afresh the affection felt by the men of the West both for her husband and her son.

Siege and Cap-
ture of Exeter,
1068.

But no one part of the land by itself could do much. The union of the men of the West with the men of the North might have brought about William's expulsion from the land. But when Exeter withstood him, York would not help; and when York was ready to strike, Exeter was already powerless. The offer of the citizens of Exeter to pay tribute to William, while they refused to receive him as king, was rejected. Its acceptance would have made Exeter an independent state or a republic like the republics which were springing up in Italy.

Disunion of the
English.

The city was besieged and taken, and Gytha, making her escape, took refuge on the Flat Holm, a small islet in the Bristol Channel. The foundation of

Last Years of
Gytha, Mother
of Harold.

the castle of Rougemont was an effectual precaution against future risings of the citizens of Exeter.

CHAPTER XL.

THE PROGRESS OF THE CONQUEST.

**General Feeling
in the North.**

ALTHOUGH the land south of the Thames had received William as its king, the Northumbrian country had not made its submission. To its people William was still nothing more than a foreign invader, and they waited only for leaders who should guide them in the work of his expulsion. Such leaders they thought they had found in Morkere and Eadwine, and these two earls declared their readiness to undertake the enterprise.

**Motives of the
Northern Earls.**

It mattered not to them that Eadwine's motive for that which they called lawful war, but which the Normans styled rebellion, was simply anger against William because he delayed or declined to fulfil

For the present William might have thought that the work of conquest was achieved. The towns made their peace with him, and his castles rose to insure their permanent subjection. But in truth he had not yet set up any firm rule. Normans and English were virtually at open war with each other; and on the weaker side there was nothing but a widely-spread and growing misery. In the parts of the country which were still unsubdued, hatred of the foreigner might soon fan the smouldering embers into flame; and the fire burst forth when Robert of Comines went to take possession of the earldom of Northumberland, which had been granted to him by the Conqueror.

Insecurity of
the Normans.

Entering Durham, Robert was lodged at the bishop's house; but he allowed his followers to plunder the town just as though he had been met with an armed resistance. The tidings spread, and in the morning the men of the country round burst through the gates, set fire to the bishop's house, and put the earl and his men to the sword. Hurrying from Scotland, the Ætheling Edgar was soon at the head of the Northumbrian forces, which, joined by the citizens of York, assailed the castle built to overawe the town.

Tumult at Dur-
ham.

But they were dealing with one whose hands were swift to strike. Having scattered or slain the besiegers, William built a second castle, and departed. Again the English rose, and again he smote them down. But the resistance offered to him seemed to be taking the form of merely local revolts or risings, not always acceptable to the people in whose land they took place. The sons of Harold appeared in Devonshire (June 1069) in the guise of enemies rather than of friends. Like their father at Porlock (page 124), they began to ravage the land, and, like him, they were

The Sons of
Harold at Por-
lock. 1069.

forced to fight a pitched battle. Utterly defeated they made their escape to Ireland. The record of their flight is the last mention made of the fortunes of the once mighty house of Godwine.

Invasion of the
Danish King
Swend.

The man who might have turned these fruitless and unhappy enterprises to good account, and who had failed to do so, now came forward to strike a blow in his own behalf (autumn 1069). The fleet of the Danish king, Swend, commanded by his brother, who had once been an English earl, approached the eastern coast of the island just two months after the discomfiture of Harold's sons in the west. If he was acting in concert with them (and it would seem that he was), he was thus much too late. That Swend did not profess to claim the English crown for himself, seems proved by the fact that Edgar hastened to join the Danes when their ships sailed up the Humber.

Capture of York.
Return of the
Danes to their
Ships.

Edgar here met Waltheof, earl of Northampton, the only Englishman who, in William's reign, died on the scaffold on a political charge and who

William was not a man who would fail to avail himself of the infatuation of his adversaries. He met the Danes in Lindesey (page 90), and compelled them to retreat into Holderness; and having repaired the castles of York, he deliberately set about the work which he had come specially to accomplish in the north. He had resolved, we are told, to make the whole land utterly desolate; and if we are to believe the story as it is told, he literally made of Northumbria a waste howling wilderness.

**The Harry
the North**

The chief weapon which he employed was fire. Houses were burnt, with all household goods and tools; corn was burnt; stores of food were burnt; horses and cattle were burnt; all, in fact, that could be burnt was thrown into the flames. Every tree was cut down; and all this fiendish work was done under the eye of the Conqueror himself. The unrighteous man had, in truth, passed into the lowest depths, not of wickedness only, but of folly.

**Cruelty
Folly of
Ham.**

It is not easy to know how to take the language in which the old historians describe this monstrous iniquity. Between York and Durham the only inhabitants of the towns, it is said, were robbers and wild beasts; but if all Northumbria was swept so absolutely bare, it is hard to see how the robbers could ply their craft, or the wild beasts find food. It is more than enough to be assured that the havoc then done permanently crippled the north of England, until the manufacturing industries of recent times brought back to it far more than its lost importance. That the havoc was, at least, as great as this, is proved by the terrible Domesday entries, which describe the condition of the land in Yorkshire.

**Extent
Effect of
Ravages.**

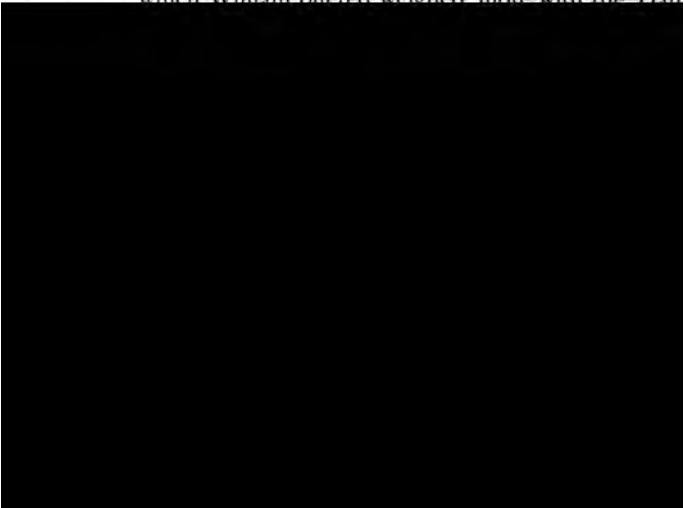
This frightful picture shows us the character of this

W

really godless man, who cheated himself into the thought that he was righteous because he avoided doing certain things and was careful in going through all religious ceremonies. Taking credit for mercy because he slew men only in open war, he could not bring about a state of things compared with which a state of war might well seem happy. We are carried back to the days of Harold's oath (page 135), and we see the natural fruit of a heart, from first to last, hard as the nether millstone.

Impact with
the Danes.

Nor was it in Yorkshire or in Durham only that William's hand fell heavy. The curse of his presence was felt from the banks of the Tees to the walls of Chester. The death of myriads and the desolation of a thousand homes enabled William to thank God for his success in the holy work of punishing rebellion and left him also better able to deal with the commander of the Danish fleet, which still lay in the Humber. In truth, there was little left in the land for which it was worth while to fight, and the bribe which William offered weighed more with the Danes.



CHAPTER XLI.

THE COMPLETION OF THE CONQUEST.

WILLIAM was now undisputed king over the whole land; and from this time resistance to him becomes no longer war, but rebellion. But resistance to his power did not end here, and in each case the question is raised as to the justification for the rising. Unless tyranny and cruel oppression are to go on always with impunity, the right of insurrection cannot be denied to the people. It was exercised by Englishmen against Charles I., and the threat of resorting to it under illegal government has been uttered again and again. All that can be said is that insurrection cannot be justified in cases where success is absolutely hopeless.

Rebellions
against W
Ham.

On the other hand, insurgents can scarcely be expected to judge of their position with the coolness of historians, who examine it long after the enterprise has succeeded or failed. In almost every case success is either counted on or hoped for; and the presence of the Danish fleet on the eastern coast may have seemed a reasonable ground of encouragement to the English, who now resolved to maintain their freedom amidst the gloomy morasses of the fen country.

Position of t
Insurgents.

The stronghold chosen was the rising ground above which now towers the splendid pile of Ely Cathedral, looking down on the flat plain which was then a veritable sea. In these waters the Danish ships appeared after the time agreed upon by William for their final departure from England; and here, relying probably on their aid, the men who could not bring themselves

The Camp
Refuge at E
1071-72.

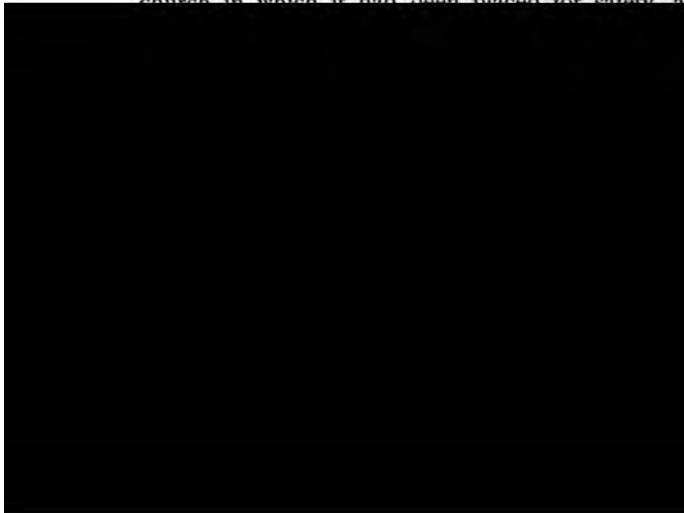
to submit to the Conqueror's yoke were gathered under the standard of Hereward.

**The History of
Hereward.**

It is well to say at once that of this leader we have scarcely any real knowledge at all. Of the resistance made to William in the isle of Ely there is no doubt, nor need we reject the statement that the man who headed it was called Hereward. But the stories told of his earlier, and again of his later days, are stories which have as little to do with history as the legends of King Arthur (page 29).

**Earlier Years of
Hereward.**

The Domesday Book speaks of a Hereward who held land in Warwickshire, and who for some reason or other was driven from his land. Popular fancy ascribed to him all sorts of wonderful adventures during the days of his exile; but when we approach the time of his great uprising, the tale ceases to have much attraction. He plunders and ruins the monastery of Peterborough, only, or chiefly, it would seem, because the abbot was a Norman. The Danes helped him to carry away the booty; the booty was burnt in the church in which it had been placed for safety.



remained until the insurgents were compelled to surrender to William, who had come against them in person. Morkere was taken across the sea and shut up in a Norman prison. Hereward made his escape, and lived, it is said, not only to marry a wealthy English lady, but to help the Conqueror in suppressing a rebellion in his continental lands.

This story is not much more likely than the tradition of his death, which represents him as attacked suddenly by a party of murderers, fifteen of whom he smote down before he was killed by four who got behind him, and plunged their daggers into his back. His revolt in Ely produced no good results for his followers, and it reflects not much credit on himself.

Story of the
Death of
Hereward.

The man with whom William had next to deal was Malcolm, king of Scotland, who had returned from a murderous foray into Cumberland, to find that the Ætheling Edgar and his sisters had come to seek refuge in his court. Margaret, one of the sisters, he married; and the union had a marked effect in making the Scottish kingdom of Dunfermline and Edinburgh more English than England itself could be under the sway of a foreign conqueror. At Abernethy Malcolm found himself face to face with William, and was constrained to declare himself his man (page 103); one condition of the treaty being probably the expulsion of Edgar, who is next heard of in Flanders.

Homage of Mal-
colm, King of
Scotland, to
William. 1072.

William was now, in form, lord of the whole island of Britain. He had reached the highest point of his greatness; but his success was followed by little either of peace or of rest. In the year after his Scottish expedition (1073), he had to cross the Channel to suppress a revolt in Maine, a region containing the

Revolt against
William in
Maine. 1073.

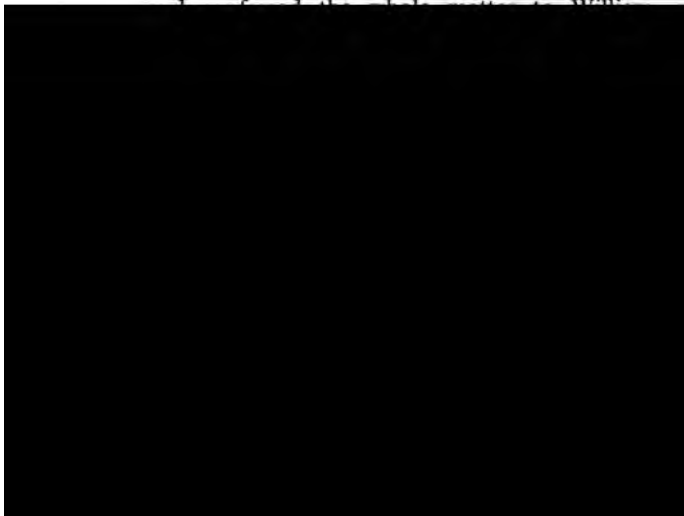
cities of Le Mans and Mayenne, which he had wrested from the domain of the French kings.

Conspiracy of
the Earls
Ralph and
Roger with
Earl Wal-
theof.

But while English soldiers were helping him subdue his revolted subjects beyond the sea, a conspiracy was being formed against him by Ralph, Earl of Norfolk, and Roger, Earl of Hereford, in which Waltheof, Earl of the shires of Huntingdon and Northampton, was implicated. Waltheof had married Judith, a niece of the Conqueror, and he had also been made Earl of Northumberland. It is not easy to say what were the motives of the chief conspirators or of how far they were shared by Waltheof. The likelihood was to be, we are told, as it had been in the days of king Edward, and, of course, all power should be shared between the three earls, one of whom would be king, the others being under-kings.

Reconciliation
of Waltheof
and William.

Waltheof's fears, it seems, were stronger than his hopes; and to whatever lengths he may have gone with the conspirators, he was so far dismayed at the prospect before him, that he hastened to Normandy.



forth as her husband's accuser. Waltheof was condemned, and soon after dawn on the morning of May 23, 1076, he was beheaded on one of the hills which rise around the city of Winchester. He was held to have died the death of a martyr, and the miracles wrought at his tomb won for him with the people a place in the catalogue of the saints.

By putting to death the only surviving earl of English blood, William doubtless thought that he was placing the coping-stone on his work of conquest. But from this moment, we are told, his fortune deserted him, and the remaining eleven years of his life were years of turmoil and disaster.

Its Supposed
Effect on Wil-
ham's Later
Fortunes.

CHAPTER XLII.

OF NEW YORK

THE MAKING OF THE NEW FOREST.

THE great harrying of Northumberland is not the only act of systematic devastation ascribed to William by writers who were living at the time. The great survey of England, of which Domesday Book is the record, was made in the year preceding his death (1085-6). Commissioners were sent to each shire, with orders to find out who had held the lands in the time of king Edward, and who held them now, what had been their value in his days, and what was their present value, and whether this value could be raised.

The Making of
Domesday
Book. 1085-86.

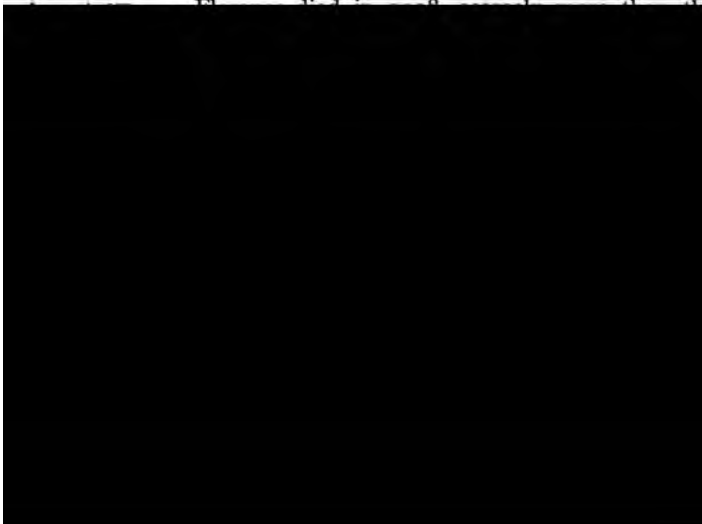
That the searching inquiries thus rendered necessary should displease a people like the English, especially when they were made by a foreign conqueror, is what we should expect. It is more

Confiscations of
Land.

important to note that the survey gives the name of many men who had lost almost all their land in the district which lies between Winchester, Southampton and Wimborne. Of men who had lost all, and therefore ceased to be landholders, the survey would take no count; but the particulars given of those who remained point to a change from comfort or wealth to one of poverty, and perhaps of actual want.

**Ravaging of the
Country for
the making
of the New
Forest.**

The region, thirty miles in extent, thus laid waste had been, we are told, in the days of the Confeſſors ſingularly fertile, populous, and rich in its villa- ges and its churches. This is the testimony of Florence of Worcester, who adds that by William's orders the people had been driven out, their houses thrown down, their churches destroyed, and their fields made the haunts of wild beasts. It is just possible that the picture drawn by Florence may be over-coloured, though the entries in Domesday leave little room for this suspicion; but the substantial truth of the assertions cannot be questioned.



To some it might give pleasure, just as war may to some give pleasure ; but it was, nevertheless, a work which might be taken in hand by men who hated war or bloodshed in any form for its own sake. The biographer of Alfred the Great speaks of the care with which he directed the various measures to be taken for hunting down the wild beasts, just as he speaks of the care with which in all other ways he consulted the interests and the welfare of his people.

But all Alfred's orders had reference to the destruction of animals which interfered with the tilling of the land and the ingathering of its harvests. In like manner, when Eadgar imposed a duty of wolves' heads on Welsh chiefs (page 73), he wished to rid the land of noxious vermin ; and we have evidence which cannot be disputed that the race of wolves was not brought to an end as speedily as the old story would have us believe. We have writs of Edward I. authorizing the destruction of wolves in Gloucestershire and other western counties. The bear survived in Scotland long after the time of the Norman conquest, and the wild boar was still a formidable enemy to the farmer and the herdsman.

Alfred's Orders
about Wild
Beasts.

But until William turned a fruitful land into a howling wilderness, the idea of preserving wild beasts for the sake of the pleasure of hunting them was a thing utterly unheard of. Thus far all might hunt, where there was any hunting to be done, and the huntsmen were regarded as doing a good work. But the practice of feeding and preserving beasts for the pleasure of chasing and worrying them to death introduced the exclusiveness which was resented as a tyranny, and the frightful punishments for trespass, which were felt to be a hideous wrong. It was

Norman Restrictions of the
Right of Chase.

deemed, and rightly deemed, a horrible thing that men should be seen with their eyes gouged out, their noses slit, or their hands or feet cut off, because they had violated the sanctuary set apart for beasts which ruined their crops or harried their flocks.

Oppression and
Misery of the
People.

Well might the miserable people say that the cruel king "loved the high deer as though he were the father," and that though "his rich men moaned at and the poor men bewailed it, he was so stiff that he recked not of their hatred, but they must all follow the king's will, if they would live and have their lands or their goods." Well also might they mark the divine judgments the disasters which in this artificial wilderness befell the family of the Conqueror; how here his son Richard, and another Richard, his grandson, met with a sudden and mysterious death and how here his favourite son, William, the Red King, died by a stroke yet more mysterious.

William's Judicial
Blindness.

It is hard to avoid the thought that the man who could do such deeds, and at the same time ask how the value of the lands in his kingdom could be raised



troubles of a specially galling kind. He declared, we are told, that his father had promised him the duchy before he set out to do battle with Harold, and he insisted on being invested with it at once. William refused, and the refusal drove Robert into open rebellion, in which he was aided and abetted by his mother, Matilda.

This conduct of his queen and duchess was a heavy blow to William, who was made to feel still more deeply before the walls of Gerberoi the effects of family discords. Robert wounded his father in close combat, and defeated his forces (1080). For the first time in his life William was not a victor in the field of stricken battle.

Defeat of William by his Son Robert at Gerberoi. 1080.

Three years later (1083), Matilda died; but before this fresh sorrow fell upon him he had come to open strife with his brother Odo (page 151). The bishop of Bayeux was doing his best to secure his own election as Pope when the papacy should become vacant by the death of Gregory VII., better known as Hildebrand. But the bishop of Bayeux was also Earl of Kent, and William had no mind to see him in a position which might make him more powerful even than the king of the English.

Death of Matilda. 1083.

William had left Odo as his deputy in England, and Odo had made himself hated for his tyranny. On being arrested, the bishop protested against the sacrilege. "I do not meddle with clerks," was William's reply, prompted, it is said, by Lanfranc. "I seize not the bishop of Bayeux, but the Earl of Kent." As such, Odo remained in a Norman prison till William lay on his death-bed in the priory of St. Gervaise.

Imprisonment of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux.

His last quarrel was with the French king for the Vexin, the border-land between his duchy and the

Quarrel for the Vexin 1087.


king's domain. William claimed it absolutely as his own possession. The French king retorted by a coarse gibe or jest on the huge corpulency of his adversary. William swore that he should rue his scoff, and by way of requital he dealt to the city of Mantes precisely the measure which he had dealt to Northumbria.

**Destruction of
Mantes.**

He was, in truth, drunk with the fury of his rage. Here, too, everything was burnt, and William, as he rode along, urged his men to heap on fuel, that the town might give a better blaze. A stumble of his horse on the burning ashes threw him violently forward on the iron front of his saddle. Writhing with the fierce pain, he ordered a retreat. It was the last order which he gave to his soldiers.

**William's Fatal
Wound.**

He had, in fact, received a fatal wound. Borne first to Rouen, he had himself taken thence to the priory of St. Gervaise, which overlooked the town from the west. Here, being told that there was no hope of his recovery, he went through all the forms of death-bed devotion, and made his last arrangements.



have been made while it was still possible to repair much, at least, of the mischief which he had done. But words never cost him much effort. He died praying that the Mother of God might reconcile him to her Son.

His death was a signal to the bystanders to provide for their own safety. All fled, carrying away such spoil as they could, and leaving his unwieldy corpse almost bare of covering on the floor. With some difficulty a man was found who took it, according to William's wish, for burial to Caen. Here, when in the sermon preached at the funeral the bishop of Evreux asked the people to pray for the dead man, and to forgive him any wrongs which they might have received at his hands, a Norman knight named Ascelin stood forward and claimed redress for a grievous injustice.

Burial of William's Body at Caen.

"The land on which you stand was," he said, "my father's. The man whose body you are burying took it from him by force. This church stands on my inheritance, and I forbid you to lay the corpse within its bounds." Whether his tale was true or not, it might be hard to determine; but sixty shillings were paid on the spot for the few feet of ground on which the stone coffin rested, and the promise that the whole estate should be purchased at a fitting price was faithfully kept.

Story of Ascelin.

The coffin proved to be too narrow; the body burst from the efforts made to force it in; and the funeral rites were brought abruptly to an end with a disgusting incident, not altogether out of keeping with the general character of his life.

Incidents of the Ceremony.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE REIGN OF WILLIAM II.

**Character of
William Rufus.**

If the character of William the Conqueror is most of its aspects repulsive, that of his favourite son, William Rufus, is loathsome. The Conqueror's religion was of the sort which the Hebrew prophet righteously denounced as the worst of all abominations; but, such as it was, the Red King cast it altogether. He cared not to have a cloak for his vices; and his vices, we are told, drove the saintly archbishop Anselm from the kingdom in utter despair. It is of little use to say that the picture drawn of him may be over-coloured. After all allowances are made, we still have before us the image of a man who openly defied God and made a mock of His law, in place of which he set up what he was pleased to call law or code of honour.

Election of Wil-

lhelm. This code of honour or chivalry we need not



it was especially distasteful. Odo was now again at liberty, and he set before the Norman nobles in England the advantage of keeping the kingdom and the duchy in the same hands, and of leaving both in the hands of the heedless Robert, under whom they might do as they liked.

His words led to a general revolt of the Normans against the king, who appealed to his English subjects, promising them righteous and equal government according to the laws of king Edward (page 108). His appeal was answered, and his promises, carefully remembered, served as stones for the foundation of the new fabric of English freedom which was to assume a definite shape in the reign of Henry III.

In the Red King the English had a competent military leader, and under such a leader they had never been found wanting. Odo was driven from his castle of Rochester (1088); a Norman fleet was beaten back at the place where the Conqueror had effected his fatal landing two-and-twenty years before; and William was left free to deal with his brother Robert as Robert's partisans had attempted to deal with him.

In the open strife which now broke out between the brothers, Robert asked the help of his over-lord the French king; and the French king, coming to his aid, took the gold with which William bribed him, and went home again. William, in fact, knew his brother well; and he knew therefore that against him money was a weapon far more effectual than the sword.

The fortune of the war, too, went against Robert. William had already wrested some portions of the duchy from him by force, when Robert was smitten

Revolt of Odo
and the Nor-
man Nobles.

Defeat of Odo
at Rochester.
1088.

Desertion of
Duke Robert
by the French
King.

Robert joins the
First Crusade.
1096.

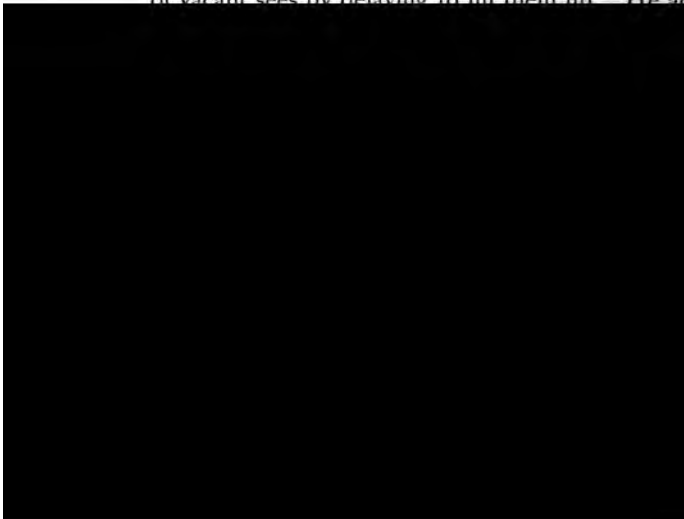
by the impulse which drove the chivalry of Europe to the first crusade (1096). But the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem from the grasp of the infidel was an enterprise not to be accomplished without money. Robert lacked money, and he offered to pledge the remains of his duchy to William for a thousand marks. William accepted the offer, although he had not the money any more than Robert, but he had a people from whom it might be squeezed in the form of a tax.

**Pledging of
Normandy to
William by
Robert.**

The tax caused a dearth approaching to a famine and provoked bitter complaints. But the money was paid, and William was master of both England and Normandy, for he had made up his mind to devise some excuse for outwitting his brother if he should return to redeem his pledge.

**Death of Lan-
franc. 1089.**

William had hit upon other modes of enriching himself besides direct taxation. Randolph Flamborough, whom he promoted to the bishopric of Durham, suggested to him that he might enjoy the revenues of vacant sees by delaying to fill them up. He agreed.



Anselm resisted, but he resisted on grounds very different from those on which Pope Gregory VII. (Hildebrand) laid stress as essential to the very being of the church. He expressed no reluctance to receive the archbishopric directly from the king; but he doubted probably the sincerity of the king's repentance, and he urged as his excuse for refusing the offer, that he was under pledge of fidelity to the Duke of Normandy and the archbishop of Rouen.

Resistance of
Anselm.

The consent of both the archbishop and the duke was easily obtained, and Anselm, into whose hands the crozier had been forcibly thrust, sat in Lanfranc's seat, prepared to fight with more than Lanfranc's zeal for that which he deemed to be right.

His Resistance
overcome.

Recovery from sickness at once made the king his enemy. By his order Randolph Flambard arrested the primate as he entered his metropolitan city. Anselm was told that William expected a large sum for promoting him to the see. The five hundred pounds which Anselm contrived to collect Rufus rejected with scorn as a beggarly dole. Urging that for the present he could do no more, Anselm pledged himself to further payments if he were treated like a free man. "If I am treated as a slave," he added, "you will have neither me nor mine." "Go; I want neither you nor yours," was William's furious answer.

Quarrel of Wil-
liam with
Anselm. 1093.

William was about to sail for Normandy, and Anselm, anxious for peace, besought the good offices of the bishops to bring about a reconciliation. William insisted on an immediate payment of five hundred pounds, and a second payment of the like sum after a short interval. The archbishop replied that he had not the money, and that his vassals had been so drained by the king's taxations that they were wholly unable to furnish it. William burst into frantic rage.

Demands on
Anselm. 1095.

"Tell him that I hate him, and will hate him more and more the longer I live ; I will not own him as archbishop. He need not come to give me his blessing before I sail. I will not have it."

Departure of
Anselm for
Rome.

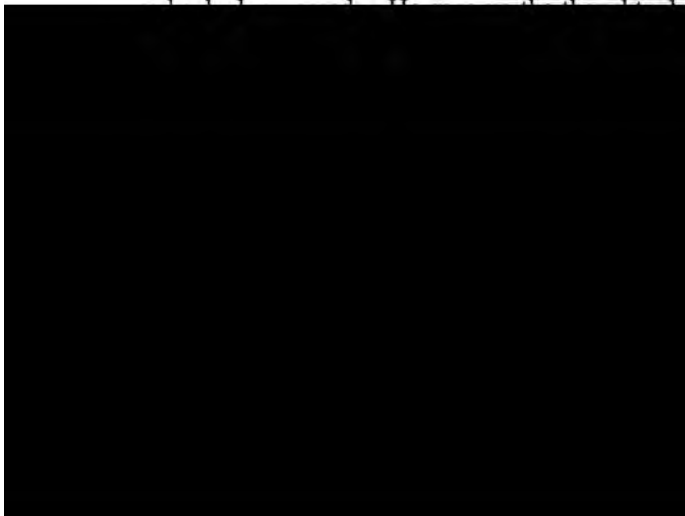
Wearied out at length, Anselm declared his purpose of going to Rome. He might do as he thought but William answered ; but if he went, the king would take to himself the revenues of his see. Unmoved by the threat, the archbishop went to him and offered him his blessing before he left the land. William bowed his head, Anselm made over him the sign of the cross, and left the room (1095).

William's Sub-
sequent Career.

The king and the primate never met again. William's subsequent course was more mad and defiant than it had been before. Politically he achieved some marked success. He gave a king to Scotland, and he held Maine (page 169) in his grasp.

Death of Wil-
liam in the
New Forest.
1100.

But strange signs, it is said, portended his coming doom ; his sleep was disturbed by dreams, and his attendants besought him not to go out to the chase.



CHAPTER XLV.

REIGN OF HENRY I.

AMONG those who accompanied the Red King, when he went forth to his death, was his younger brother Henry.

The Ætheling Henry.

Henry had no sooner seen him struck down, than he hurried away to Winchester to secure the royal treasures. William of Breteuil, who was in charge of the castle and its contents, refused to surrender them to any one except Robert, who was far away. Henry drew his sword upon him, and enforced obedience, and all fear as to his election to the throne passed away. "The Witan, that were near at hand, then chose him," we are told, "for king;" and the choice, we are assured, was peculiarly acceptable to the people generally.

His Election by the Witan. 1100.

Born in England after the coronation of Matilda (1068), Henry was, and was regarded as, an English Ætheling, the son of a crowned king and queen. He was trained, it is said, to speak in English as well as in Norman-French, and he was believed, while he was still a boy, to have translated into English, from Greek, the fables known as those of Æsop. This unusual amount of learning won for him the name Beauclerk; but whether he added to it, or retained it in after years, we cannot say.

His Education.

Standing by the bedside of the dying Conqueror, he heard his father assign Normandy to Robert, and express the hope that William might rule in England, and was driven to ask what he had for himself. The answer was, "Five thousand pounds of silver from my hoard." "But of what use can a hoard be to

Henry at his Father's Death-bed.

me?" he rejoined, and for reply he was bidden to patient and let his elders go before him.

Negated Predictions of the Conqueror.

The Conqueror, some said, went on to cheer him with the assurance that he should in the end rule the lands of both his brothers, and be mightier than either or both together; but this prediction may probably be classed along with those which are put into the mouth of Edward the Confessor (page 133) prophecies framed after the event.

Henry's Compact with the People.

At his coronation he not only swore to restore the old laws of king Edward (page 108), but put forth a charter in which he gave back to the people those laws as amended by his father. He won favour with all by shutting up Flaithard, the wicked bishop of Durham, in the Conqueror's fortress of the Tower, and with the English subjects by marrying Eadgyth, daughter of Malcolm of Scotland, and of Margaret, the grandchild of king Edmund Ironside. The Norman nobles mocked at the marriage, although to please them his name was changed to Matilda.

Escape of Randolph Flambard from the

Like William Rufus, Henry, at the outset of his reign, had to settle a quarrel with his brother Robert.



throne of Jerusalem. The claim was worth but little ; the duchy he had already virtually bartered away (page 180).

But Flam bard tempted him to add deeds to words. W:
A Norman fleet entered the harbour of Portsmouth. 1
The armies of the brothers faced each other. The English had thrown themselves heartily into the cause of Henry, and Anselm also laboured strenuously on his side, by recalling some of the Normans among Robert's partisans to their allegiance, and by threatening the rest with excommunication.

Like Rufus, however, Henry thought that the sword Ba
might be the least profitable way of dealing with 1
Robert. He proposed a conference, and in a few minutes the whole matter was settled. For a pension of three thousand marks Robert renounced his claims on the English crown, receiving also all the castles held by Henry in Normandy except Domfront. But although he had thus turned aside the danger, Henry had no intention of abiding by the terms of his bargain. Charges of various kinds were brought against some of Robert's partisans. The duke came across the sea to plead their cause, was welcomed with open arms, and found himself really a prisoner.

He was glad to escape with the surrender of his Ra
pension, but he returned to Normandy with the conviction that no trust whatever could be placed in his brother. He therefore allied himself with Robert of Belesme, Earl of Shrewsbury, a fiendish monster of cruelty, who had been outlawed from England (not for his foul deeds, but for his attachment to Duke Robert), and who possessed thirty-four castles in Normandy.

Henry chose to regard this alliance as a declara- B
tion of war, and the decision of the sword was

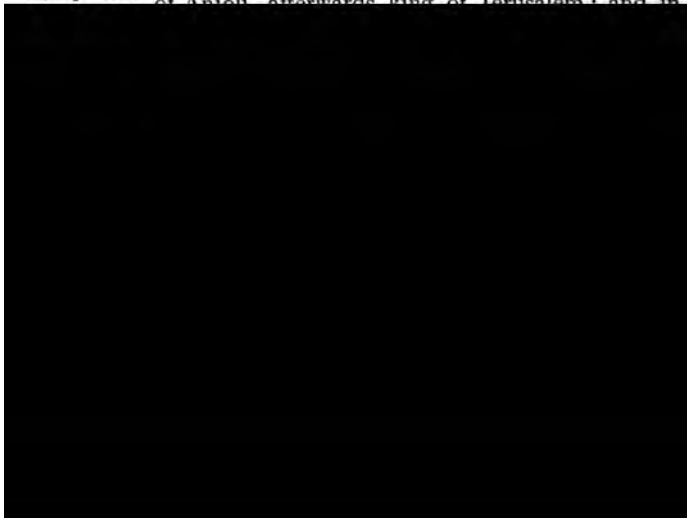
given against Robert before the walls of Tencheb (1106). The duke was taken prisoner, and had to drag through nearly thirty years in captivity before he died in the castle of Cardiff (1134).

**Henry's Designs
for his Son
William.**

Lord of England and of Normandy, Henry now did his best to insure the succession of his son, Ætheling William, by making his nobles of Normandy, and the Witan in England, become his men, and do homage to him. The right of election of their kings had not yet fallen into abeyance with the English people; but there was a manifest striving on the part of Henry to treat the kingdom as a possession which might be passed from one man to another. Such a course was indeed only the logical result of the Norman Conquest; for amongst the various circumstances on which William grounded his claim was the plea that he had been freely chosen by the people, which assuredly was not one.

**Return of Henry
to England
from Nor-
mandy. 1120.**

But Henry's plan was to come to nothing. His young son received as his wife the daughter of Fulk of Anjou, afterwards king of Jerusalem; and in



the prince and his party lingered in the harbour, feasting and revelling. Three barrels of wine distributed among the crew raised their spirits at the cost of careful discipline; and when at length the order for departure was given, every sail was at once spread, and heedless steering brought the ship upon a low reef of rocks about a mile and a half from the port.

The captain, Fitz-Stephen, placed the Ætheling in a boat, which had started for the shore, when William, hearing the shrieks of his sister, compelled the oarsmen to return for her. A crowd pressed into the boat, which was upset, and all were drowned. The ship itself soon went down, with some three hundred who were still on board. Two only escaped, clinging to the mast. Swimming to these, Fitz-Stephen asked for the prince, and on learning that he had been drowned, gave up the struggle for life. In the morning the only survivor, a butcher of Rouen, was taken up by a fishing smack, and told the woful tale.

Death of the
Ætheling Wil-
liam.

Meanwhile Henry at Southampton was wondering at the slowness of Fitz-Stephen's vessel. The tidings of the disaster fell on him as an overwhelming blow. Henry's heart was hard enough, but he had now lost one whom he loved, and whom he hoped to leave behind him as his heir. We are told that he never smiled again; but his grief was not shared by his subjects. William had already shown himself in a light which boded them little good.

Grief of Henry.

CHAPTER XLVI.

REIGN OF HENRY I. (*continued*).

Matilda, Daughter of Henry.

HENRY's hopes as to the succession had thus fallen to the ground. His wife Matilda had died two years before (1118), and he had no legitimate son surviving. In the year after the disaster of the *White Ship* he married a second wife, but the marriage was childless. His daughter Matilda had been married to King Henry of Germany, afterwards Emperor; but she, too, was childless, and in 1125 the death of Henry left her a widow.

Proposal of Henry to the Witan. 1126.

Under these conditions the new theory of hereditary right, involved, as we have seen, in the claims of the Conqueror, was advanced another step. Except one single instance, in which for a short time a woman had discharged the duties of a sovereign in Wessex, a female reign was a thing unknown both in Normandy and in England. But this did not deter Henry from

daughter, the widowed empress, in marriage to Geoffrey, son of Fulk of Anjou (page 186). From this marriage he looked for an increase to his power; it brought him nothing but discomfort, and to his country it caused nineteen years of misery. Matilda, whose married life was a wretched one, became the mother of three children, one of whom was Henry II. of England.

With the narrative of these schemes and plans the story of the reign of Henry I. comes, in one sense, practically to an end. The internal history of the country may be given in a few words. The chronicles speak of the king's exactions, of his strict, and sometimes severe, administration of justice, and of phenomena affecting, or supposed to affect, the seasons and harvests. We could not have stronger evidence that, in comparison with the two preceding reigns, the sway of Henry was a period of ease and welfare for the people. The least eventful times are commonly the happiest; and in this long-continued quiet lies Henry's best title to the name of a great king.

Like his brother William, Henry had also a quarrel with the archbishop Anselm; but with the likeness between the two cases there are many points of serious difference. We have seen (page 181) that Anselm raised no objection to receiving the ring and pastoral staff from the king except on the ground that he was not his subject, and that he was bound by allegiance to others. But now we find that it is precisely this form of investiture, as it was called, which Anselm strenuously resists.

The truth is that neither he nor his predecessor Lanfranc had thoroughly imbibed the principles by which the great Hildebrand (Gregory VII.) declared

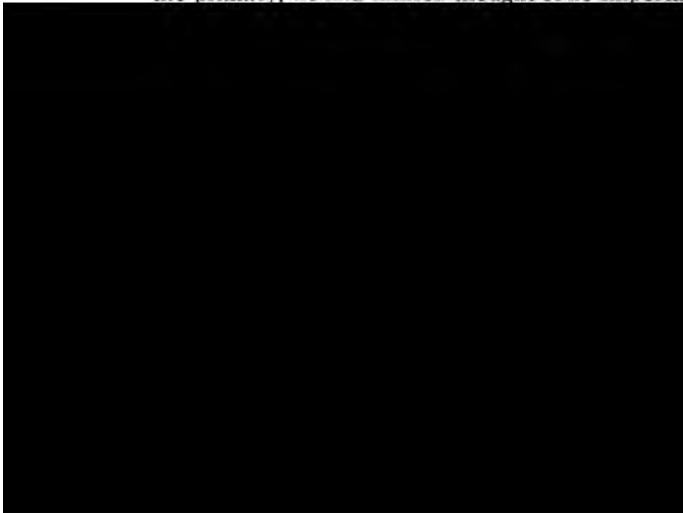
that the vicars of Christ must be guided. But Red King had, by tyranny, driven Anselm from England, and Anselm naturally sought refuge at the feet of the Pope, to whom the Conqueror's excommunicator (page 137) had taught him to appeal.

Change in the
Views of An-
selm.

Anselm went to Rome seemingly under the impression that the English church was only a foreign English nation seen in another aspect. He came back with the conviction that they were distinct powers, of which the church, with the Pope at the head, must be the higher. The Pope had ruled that the bestowal of ring and staff by the king implied the bestowal of a spiritual as distinct from a temporal office, and that compliance with this practice was therefore on the part of bishops a betrayal of the church of God.

The Papal
Power.

Anselm accepted this ruling; but it must have been manifest to himself that the matter in dispute was not one of essential right or essential wrong. It was a matter which, at the time of his appointment to the primacy, he had himself thought of no importance.



members of capitular and collegiate bodies must be unmarried. It decreed that no married men should be ordained, and that none already in orders should marry; but it did not separate married priests from their wives.

It was the Synod of Westminster, held under Anselm in 1102, which first enforced this prohibition against all the clergy without exception; and even now the opposition to it was not slight. A historian of the time, himself a monk and the son of a married priest, tells us that it caused much more evil than it cured. It must not be forgotten that the rule of celibacy for the clergy was the absolute rule of the English Church for only about four centuries out of the thirteen of its existence to the present time.

Synod of Westminster. 1102.

Henry outlived his brother Robert by one year only. Some months before Robert's death, Henry left England for the last time. He reached his continental dominions only to be harassed by fresh disputes between his daughter Matilda and her husband. He had been king for nearly thirty-six years when he died in 1135. On his death-bed he professed to leave his dominions absolutely to the widow of the emperor. His body was, after some delay, placed in the church of the great monastic house which he had founded at Reading.

Death of Henry I. 1135.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE REIGN OF STEPHEN.

THE arrangements for the succession proposed by Henry I. failed to secure a peaceful reign for his daughter, but they succeeded fully in inflicting nine-

Harrying of the Royal Forests.

teen years of misery on the whole land. His death was a signal for much lawless violence, which directed mainly against the royal forests, where are told that in a few days scarcely a single beast the chase was left alive.

**Election of
Stephen.**

In the midst of this confusion, his sister Ade-
son Stephen landed in England, and was cho-
king by the citizens of London and such other c-
men of the land as could be got together (1175).
and after his crowning, Stephen, by his promises
his charters, pledged himself to more than had b-
promised by Henry I. (page 184).

**Appeals to the
Pope.**

The policy of the Conqueror was in ano-
direction producing its natural fruit. The Conqueror
had been glad to parade before the world the Po-
approval of his plans of invasion and robbery ; Step-
adduced the confirmation of the pontiff as add-
strength to his title to the crown. The Conqueror
had invited from the Pope a condemnation of
alleged perjury of Harold (page 135) ; the clergy
promised to be faithful to Stephen only so long as

usurper. His election was lawful ; but bitter experience showed that it was singularly imprudent.

The personal character of Stephen stands out in marked contrast with that of his two uncles and of his grandfather who had reigned before him. Chroniclers, whose honesty we may fairly trust, seem never to be wearied in speaking of the kindliness of his disposition and the charm of his manners, of the affability which enabled him to associate with the meanest and the weakest without even the appearance of condescension, and still more of his readiness to forgive those who had done him wrong.

In short, Stephen was a kind and courteous gentleman, free from the vices of his predecessors, and honestly anxious to do his duty. But something more than this is needed in one who is to rule under the conditions in which Stephen found himself. He lacked the mind to plan and the strength to execute, which marked the career of his uncle. What Henry proposed to do, that he did ; what Stephen intended to do, that he commonly left undone. Men on all sides were not slow to discern this weakness, and the result was anarchy.

Professing to draw his sword on behalf of the widowed empress Matilda, David of Scotland invaded Northumbria again and again, until the frightful havoc wrought by his followers roused in Thurstan, archbishop of York, the energy of righteous indignation. Summoned by him to fight for all that they valued, and to stand by each other to the death, the barons and their men gathered round the mast of a ship, which, placed on a cart, and crowned with a silver box containing the consecrated wafer of the Eucharist, was to serve as their standard. The battle, known hence as the Battle of the Standard,

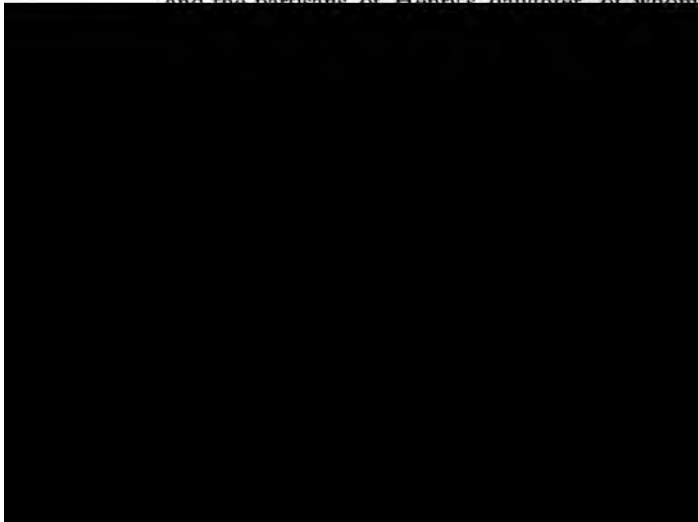
ended in the thorough rout of David's army (August 22nd, 1138).

Welsh Inroads.

But for Stephen troubles were thickening everywhere. The Welsh harried the English marches, the English are said to have formed a conspiracy massacring all the Normans in England. This is as inconceivable in this form as the later legend of the massacre of St. Brice (page 80), points probably to a rising of Englishmen against the mercenaries who fought under Stephen's banners, as well as those of his enemies, and who, on either side, did their best to make the misery of the land intolerable.

**Building
Castles.**

of Nor was the work of torture and murder confined to those who sold their strength for pay and plunder. All who had wealth enough and power enough hastened to build themselves fastnesses from which they could pounce, like birds of prey, on those whom they might safely make their victims. The chronicler draws no distinction between the partisans of Stephen and the partisans of Henry's daughter, of whom



could imagine the outlines of his picture, even if we allow that its details may be somewhat overdone.

Among these builders of castles, though perhaps not guilty of the same iniquities, Roger, bishop of Salisbury, and his nephews, the bishops of Ely and Lincoln, stand pre-eminent. Stephen seized them, deprived them of their fortresses, and sent them back, we are told, to the proper work of their dioceses. His act was far from being too severe; but he had not taken care to dress it out in the form of law, and the only result was to provoke or embitter the quarrel between himself and the clergy.

Stephen's Dealings with the Bishops of Salisbury, Ely, and Lincoln.

A time of indescribable wretchedness followed the landing of Matilda (the empress) in England (September 1139). At Lincoln, abandoned by his mercenaries and his subjects, Stephen was taken prisoner. His brother Henry, bishop of Winchester, openly embraced the cause of Matilda, whom, in his cathedral church, he received and acknowledged as the Lady of the land. The ceremony has been spoken of as her coronation, but nothing is said of her being either anointed or crowned.

Landing of Matilda. 1139.

The Synod which met after this ceremony asserted plainly that the right of electing the English kings belonged chiefly to the clergy; and it vindicated its own authority by acknowledging Matilda as the Lady of England and Normandy. But this recognition led her only to show herself in her real character—a character in strange contrast with that of Stephen. For his kindness and courtesy Matilda substituted the haughtiest arrogance, as well as the most studied and coarse insolence that could well be laid to the charge of either man or woman.

Synod of Lincoln.

She would not listen to the wife of Stephen when she asked that her husband might be released from

Impetuous Conduct of Matilda.

prison, or suffered to end his days as a pilgrim. The citizens of London prayed her to govern by the laws of king Edward; in other words, to rule as Godwine and Harold had ruled. She replied only with reproaches for what they had done for Stephen, and with fresh demands of money for herself.

Escape of Matilda from Oxford Castle. 1141.

Her recompense came quickly. The Londoners drove her from their gates. Henry of Winchester declared himself again on the side of his brother; and Matilda, besieged in the castle of Oxford, had to make her escape from the walls in a bitter frost and a dreadful storm, clad in a white dress, which was no contrast with the snow which fell about her (December 1141).

Departure of Matilda from England. 1147.

Still for some years longer the miserable strife went on, till, sickened with toil and left the country, eight years after she had left the country, eight years after she had left the following year (1148), Robert, Earl of Gloucester, died, and Stephen was left in undisputed possession of the crown.

Return of Stephen. During four of the last six years of his reign.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

REIGN OF HENRY II.

THE reign of the first Angevin¹ king of the English is taken up with three great matters. The first is the struggle with the ecclesiastical power. The second is the conquest of Ireland. The third is his action as a continental sovereign.

The Angevin
Kings of Eng-
land.

But Henry's quarrel with the Church, which was, in fact, a quarrel with the archbishop of Canterbury, was preceded by a period during which his rule was purely for the benefit of the country. No sooner was Stephen dead, than the mercenaries, who had made war, horrible in itself, doubly horrible, were driven away. The castles which had been built without licence were destroyed, and all holders of castles of every degree were compelled to submit to the royal authority.

Vigour of
Henry's Early
Rule.

In this great task he was most ably counselled and aided by the friend in whom he placed absolute confidence. This was Thomas of London, often called Thomas Becket, of whose birth the fiction-makers of a later age told wonderful stories, which were utterly unknown to any of his contemporary biographers.

Thomas of Lon-
don (Becket).

These legends spoke of the captivity of his father in the Holy Land; of his deliverance by the daughter of his master; of the love which brought the maiden from Palestine in search of the man who had forgotten

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¹ The Angevin kings and their descendants (of the house of Anjou) are also known as Plantagenets, from the *Planta genista*, or broom plant. The story ran that the first of the race made a pilgrimage to Rome, where he was scourged with broom twigs, and was hence called Plantagenista.

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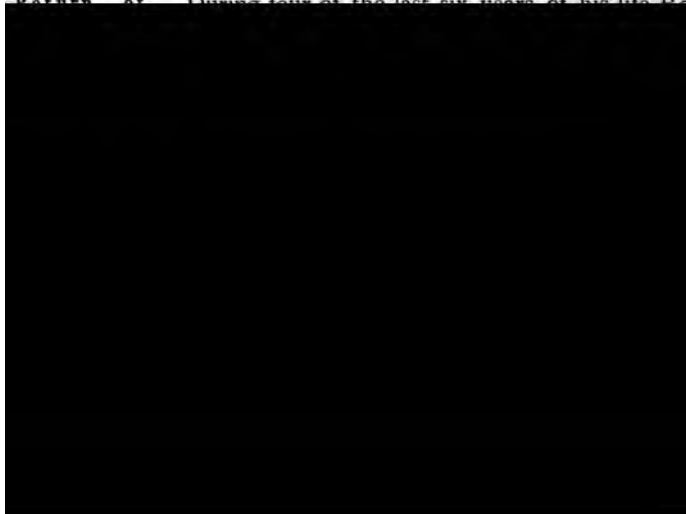
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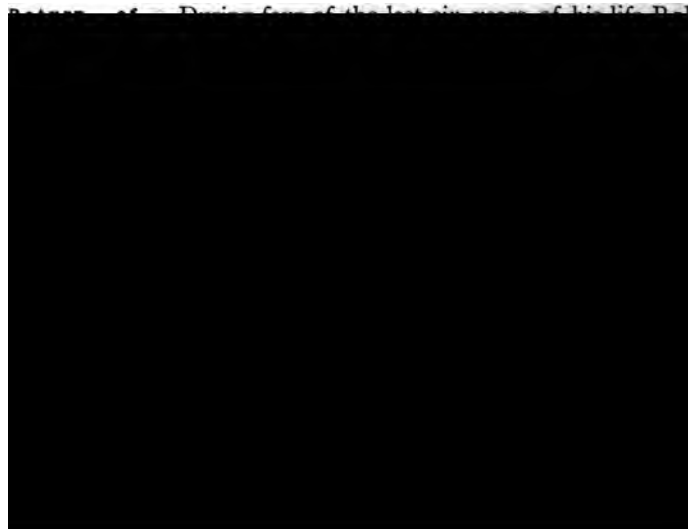
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Return of Henry, Son of Matilda.

During four of the last six years of his life Robert of Gloucester had had under his care the young son of Matilda, who was afterwards to sit on the English

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CHAPTER L.

REIGN OF HENRY II. (*continued*).

English Em-
bassy to the
French King
and the Pope.

THOMAS was now an exile, but he was not with friends. Henry sent ambassadors to request French king not to admit within his dominions traitor who had been archbishop of Canterbury. "Has been!" said Louis; "who has dared to depose him? Is this the gratitude of the English king all the good offices of his chancellor?" From the presence of Louis the envoys passed to that of Pope. When Foliot, the spokesman, applied to archbishop the saying (Prov. xxviii. 1) which speaks of the wicked flying when none pursues, the Pope bade him forbear, not for the primate's sake, but for his own.

Restoration of
the Primacy
to Becket by
the Pope.

To the archbishop Pope Alexander paid marks of respect. On ten out of the sixteen constitutions of Clarendon he pronounced his unqualified condemnation.

tions of Clarendon, excommunicated all who approved them, and absolved from their oaths the bishops who had sworn to observe them. A long course of negotiations was followed by an interview between the primate and the English and French kings at Montmirail (January 1169). But the primate's declaration that he would submit himself to their judgment, "saving the honour of God," drove Henry into another fit of frenzy. The treaty was broken off, and the archbishop not long afterwards excommunicated Foliot, now bishop of London, with many other adherents of the king.

At this point the Pope seemed to desert the English primate. He authorized the absolution of the bishops of London and Salisbury, and sanctioned the king's strange scheme of having his son crowned during his lifetime by the archbishop of York. Becket, in his turn, was now furious. He declared that at Rome Christ was always crucified, and Barabbas released; that he committed his cause now not to the Pope, but to God alone; and that if God so willed it, he was ready to die.

Vacillation of
the Pope.

But just when the strife seemed most hopeless, it was suggested to the king that the primate would be less dangerous within the kingdom than he was outside; and Henry, struck with the soundness of the advice, made a hollow truce with Becket when they met at Fretteville (July 1170). At the end of their conversation, the archbishop, dismounting from his horse, threw himself at Henry's feet. Henry raised him up, and held the stirrup while Becket seated himself again on the saddle.

Treaty of Fretteville. 1170.

Becket returned to England; but he came back not to forgive, but to punish. He anathematized the bishops who had been concerned in the coronation

Return of
Becket
England. to

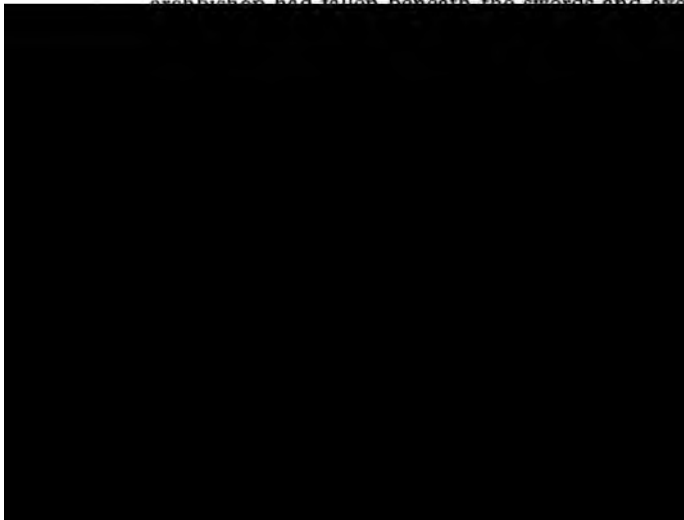
of the young prince, and on Christmas Day (1171) in his cathedral at Canterbury, he renewed censures, dashing on the pavement, in token of utter extinction, the candle which he held in his hand.

Complaints of the Excommunicated Bishops to the King.

The excommunicated bishops hurried away to present themselves to the king, who asked them what he should do. His rage had already well-mastered him, when one of them foolishly said that he could never hope for peace so long as Thorpe lived. Henry could contain himself no longer. "Among my thankless and cowardly courtiers," he asked, "is there not one who will rid me of a long-born and turbulent priest?"

Murder of Becket in the Cathedral of Canterbury.

Four knights, hearing these words, left the room and lost no time in crossing the Channel. On the next day Henry issued orders for the arrest of the primate, charging his envoys to prevent the knights from taking any action on their own account. But murderers are not given to loitering on their way, and before Henry's orders could be executed, Archbishop Becket had fallen beneath the swords and axes



Three years later (1174), Henry did penance at the shrine of his friend, baring his back to the scourges of the monks, and spending a whole night there in prayers and tears. The popular verdict, accepted by the Pope, had placed Becket in the front rank of the saints; and we can well understand how the imagination of the people would be impressed by such a career and such an end as his.

Penance of
Henry at Can-
terbury. 1174.

But if Becket died in defence of the laws of the Church, it cannot be said that he died in defence of the laws of God. We find no rebukes of Henry's vices, no denunciation of his oppressive statutes, of violence, extortion, and corruption. If the king could only have left the clerks to the judgment of their fellows, and so admitted the righteousness of the claims urged by the primate for his order, there is no reason for supposing that the archbishop's lips would ever have been opened to denounce the gross vices of which Henry was beyond doubt guilty.

Aims and Mo-
tives of Thomas
of Canterbury.

CHAPTER II.

THE REIGN OF RICHARD I.

APART from his continental dominions, Henry II., by his election to the English throne, became entitled to call himself over-lord of Scotland and of Wales. Before he died, he could also call himself lord of Ireland.

The Lordship of
Ireland.

In the year after his coronation, Nicolas Breakspere, the only Englishman who has ever sat in the chair of St. Peter, succeeded Anastasius IV. as Pope (1154). Nicolas, now calling himself Hadrian IV.,

Grant of Ireland
to Henry by
Pope Hadrian
IV.

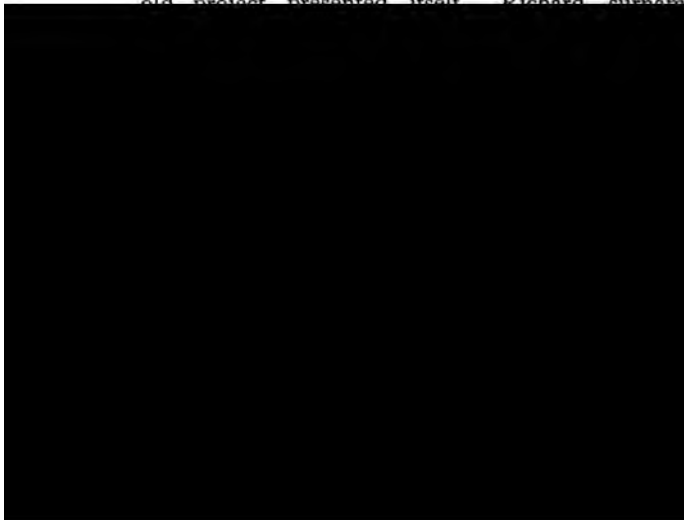
made known his high notions of the powers inherent in the papacy, by his grant of Ireland to the English king.

**Alleged
Grounds for
the making of
this Grant.**

His predecessor, Hildebrand (page 181), had some sort conferred England on William the Conqueror (page 137); but he had done so on the alleged ground of the perjury and the usurpation of Haro Hadrian granted away Ireland on the plea that islands converted to Christianity belonged to the special jurisdiction of the Pope, and he authorized Henry to invade Ireland for the spiritual benefit of inhabitants, who were sunk in gross ignorance and barbarism. The Popes of a later day applied the same principles on a larger scale when they bestowed the New World on the kings of Spain.

**Henry II. at
Dublin. 1171.**

But although Henry's thoughts turned to Ireland early in his reign, he was constrained to content himself with the papal sanction of the enterprise. Other matters demanded all his attention, and four years passed before an occasion for carrying out the old project presented itself. Richard, surnamed



Richard in his turn transferred his allegiance from his father to the French king, Philip Augustus. The discovery that his favourite son John had joined the confederacy formed against him filled up the measure of Henry's griefs. A violent fever carried him off (1189), and his body was buried in the choir of the conventual church of Fontevraud.

Death of Henry
II. 1189.

The career of Richard I., after his father's death, has not much more to do with English history than the record of his rebellion during his father's lifetime. When we have said that the country was oppressively taxed and wretchedly misgoverned, in order that the king might spend his time as a knight-errant in the Holy Land, we have virtually said all.

Reign of Richard I.

Chosen king without opposition (1189), he set to work at once to obtain the money needed for the crusade, which, but for his own rebellion, his father would have undertaken. He found a hundred thousand marks in his father's treasury at Salisbury. To these, amongst other sums, he added a thousand pounds received from the bishop of Durham for the earldom of Northumberland, and ten thousand more, paid by the Scottish king, William, for the resignation of the rights acquired over his kingdom by Henry II.

Richard's Plan
for his Crusade.

The day of his coronation was marked by a massacre of the Jews in London, some of whom had entered the palace in spite of an order issued to prevent their approaching the king on that day. This outburst of popular fury led to a terrible disaster at York, where a large number of Jews, having seized the castle, died by their own hands. Some, not having the courage to follow the example of their brethren, offered to submit to baptism if their lives were spared.

Massacre of the
Jews.

The compact was made and broken ; but Richard's

Tragedy
York.

indignation was roused, not by this horrible treachery but by the destruction of the bonds and obligations laid up in the archives of the cathedral. On the death of those who held them, these bonds were to have escheated to the king. Richard was thus deprived of vast wealth ; but all efforts to discover the offenders proved vain.

Exploits of Richard in the Third Crusade.

The exploits of the Lion-hearted King in the third crusade belong to European rather than to English history ; but they served the purpose of making the English name known throughout Christendom, and leaving the English people better pleased with themselves. Otherwise they had little reason to be proud of a king who, when the Sultan Saladin failed to carry out strictly the treaty made after the surrender of Acre (1191), led nearly three thousand hostages to the top of a hill from which they might be seen, and had them all cut down. The numbers may be exaggerated, but of the slaying of hostages there seems to be no doubt.

On his return from Palestine Richard for a



month during which his captivity should be prolonged. The plain dissatisfaction of the German barons warned the emperor of the danger of playing into the hands of John; and Richard's ransom was raised by the imposition of fresh taxes on his people.

Richard spent in England a few months only, during which he was crowned again at Winchester, and held a council at Nottingham (1194). He then left the country for the last time; and the land was ruled by Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, who had to satisfy the king's demands for money on the one side, and to avoid rousing popular discontent and indignation on the other.

Council of Nottingham. 1194.

The archbishop was not always successful. Two years after Richard's departure, London was disturbed by a movement stirred up by William, son of Osbert. William crossed the sea, made known his designs to the king, and was not unfavourably received by him. His return led to more serious tumults, and William himself took sanctuary, and was hanged for an alleged attempt at murder.

Rising of William, Son of Osbert. 1196.

By the writers of his own day he is called a traitor; in the popular view he was, as they admit, a martyr and a saint. The whole story is very dark; but this much at least is clear, that, although William may have professed himself the champion of the poor against the great, he never professed to fight on behalf of Englishmen against Normans. The distinction between Englishmen and Normans has disappeared altogether and for ever.

Fusion of Normans and English into one People.


Richard's reign was not altogether mischievous. He looked on his subjects, it is true, simply as beings out of whom money might be squeezed; but to get money from the boroughs he was obliged to grant charters which added largely to their strength and

Growth of the English Constitution.

their importance. Everywhere, too, we find practice growing of summoning a number of knights or citizens for the carrying out of measures of government. The foundations of parliamentary representation were being slowly, but surely, laid.

Death of Richard at Chaluz.
1199.

Richard's strange career of knight-errantry brought to an end in an ignoble quarrel. One of barons had offered him part of a treasure found in his land. Richard claimed the whole, and besieged him in his castle of Chaluz. An arrow shot from the walls wounded him in the shoulder. The castle stormed, and its defenders were hanged as robbers, the archer who shot the arrow being the only exception. The wound began to mortify, and Richard, aware that he must die, set the archer at liberty, ordering that a sum of money should also be given him. Instead of obeying the command, his followers, it is said, flayed the man alive. Richard's body was laid next to that of his father in the church of Fontevraud.



lying, which nothing could overcome. But from first to last his acts were overruled for the benefit of the people, for whose welfare he cared nothing.

What we have especially to note is that a change **Election of John.** was working, the issue of which was only in small part foreseen by those who were bringing it about. John was deliberately chosen king by an assembly which gave no heed to, if it had even heard of, the superior claims of John's nephew Arthur, the son of his elder brother Geoffrey.

The modern notions of hereditary right are not of English growth; but in the days of the Angevin kings they were rapidly taking shape abroad, and we find that on Richard's death the so-called title of Arthur was acknowledged by the French king and in the county of Anjou. **Supposed Title of his Nephew Arthur.**

The English practice, we are told, was clearly explained to John by Hubert, the archbishop of Canterbury, at his coronation. Hubert told him distinctly that the crown was the gift of the nation, to be bestowed as the nation thought best, and that if the kingly house could furnish a fitting man, it was right to prefer that man to a stranger. **The English Nation and the King.**

Whatever else, then, he might be, John was no usurper; but he became king at a time which gave him dangerous facilities for unduly enlarging the powers of the crown. Normans and English were now one people. Before the law the Norman baron had no privilege over the English yeoman, and the overthrowing of these distinctions had been the work of the crown. **Position of King John.**

The condition of England was, in truth, much like that of France in the days of (Saint) Louis IX. (1226-1270). The saintliness of the French king opened a way for the despotism of later sovereigns; the iniqui- **Contrast between England and France in the time of John.**

ties of John pointed out to the people the only means by which despotism could be effectually nipped in the bud.

**Defeat and Murder of Arthur.
1202.**

Although Arthur could do John no harm in England, he might oust him of his possessions abroad. John, therefore, met and defeated him in the field, and afterwards murdered him in his prison. By way of punishment for this crime, the French king declared John deprived of all lands held by homage to the French crown. Normandy was at once wrested from John's grasp, but he remained Duke of Aquitaine, the inheritance of his mother Eleanor.

**Severance of Normandy from
England.**

The Normans in England were thus severed effectually from the home of their forefathers, and nothing remained to disturb the fusion of Normans and Englishmen, which had already taken place.

John's Favourites and Mercenaries.

To cement the mass still more solidly, John adopted the fatal practice of Edward the Confessor. He did his best to secure English offices for foreign favourites, and he brought into the land swarms of foreign mercenaries. For a time he worked under constraint

on the appointment of the bishop of Norwich, a prelate fonder of wielding the battle-axe than a crozier. The Pope, Innocent III., set aside both the competitors in favour of Stephen Langton (1206).

The act violated the rights not only of the monks Int
F and of the king, but of the English people; but, although Innocent refused to give way, the result of the appointment was far from being what he looked for. Langton was foremost in the great work which wrested from the king the ratification of the Great Charter.

John was furious with rage when he found himself thus thwarted by a foreign pontiff, and he threatened an awful vengeance if Langton should venture to take possession of the see. The Pope replied by placing the land under interdict, a ban which suspended the action of the church except in the administration of baptism to infants and of the eucharist to the dying. The terror of the sentence lay in the conviction that the whole land was thus surrendered to the dominion of evil spirits, and that all intercourse between God and man had ceased.

For a time John cared nothing for the miseries thus caused. He confiscated the estates of bishoprics and abbeys, and set free the murderer of a priest with thanks for having delivered him from one of his enemies. But by the infamy of his life he was doing his best to disgust even those who stood by him, and he began to see the dangers which surrounded him when the French king, Philip Augustus, accepted the invitation of the bishops to take into his own hands the sceptre of which John had shown himself utterly unworthy. Int
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In a frenzy of passion, John threatened at first that En he would turn Mahometan and commend his kingdom

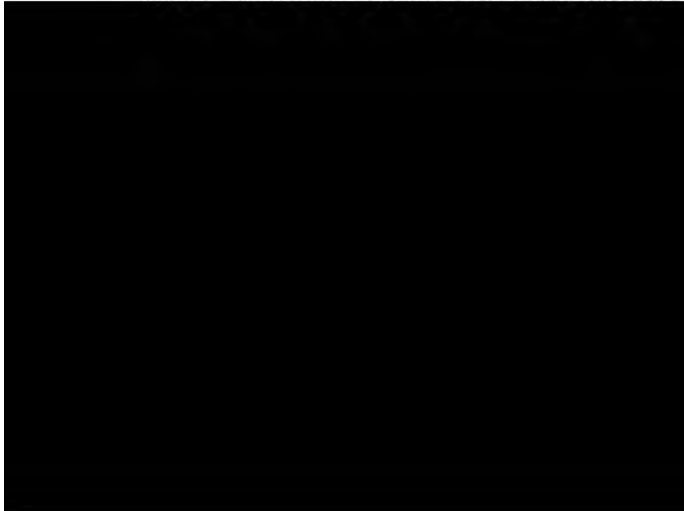
to the vicar of the prophet of Mecca ; but he came to a different conclusion when the papal legate, Pandulf, warned him of the folly of kicking longer against the pricks.

**Submission of
John to Pandulf. 1212.**

A hermit had declared that before the next feast of the Ascension should come, John would have ceased to reign. On the vigil of the feast, in the church of the Templars, John placed in the hands of Pandulf a charter, signed and sealed, which declared unservedly that he surrendered his kingdom to be held as a fief of the Pope, and he pronounced the deed irrevocable. He had, in truth, ceased to reign ; his first act was to have the hermit hanged, as having prophesied falsely.

**John under the
Protection of
the Pope.**

He had, however, gained an ally, if not a protector against the French king. Pandulf hastened to warn Philip Augustus that the vassal of the Holy See was not to be meddled with. Philip retorted that he had no objection of being baulked in an enterprise which the English bishops had besought him to undertake, and that the French nobles were not to be dismissed like men



Langton. On the flats of Runnymede, between Staines and Windsor, the king found himself compelled to sign the Great Charter which recited the ancient liberties and privileges of the English people, and added to them the fresh securities which unrighteous rule had rendered necessary.

John further swore that he would obtain no paper from Rome nullifying these promises and concessions. But he was rejoiced when the Pope, professing indignation at the wrong thus done to his vassal, declared the charter absolutely null and void, and absolved John from the duty of abiding by it.

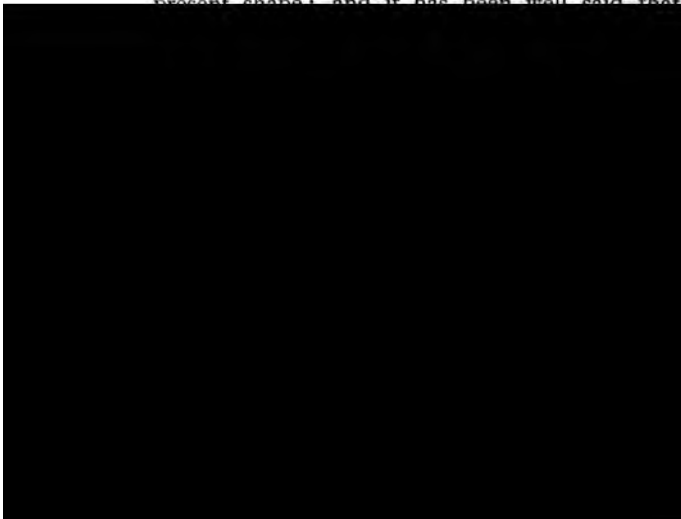
Giving no heed to the papal censures, the barons prepared for war. The Pope retorted by excommunicating the barons, expressing at the same time his amazement at the part played by the primate, who had shown himself unfaithful both to the Pope and to the king. The barons in their turn resolved on taking a step already taken by the bishops with the papal sanction. They offered the crown to the son of the French king. A French fleet sailed from Calais to Dover; a French prince received the homage of the barons in London; but the rumour got about that he looked on the faithlessness of the people to John as an earnest of their future faithlessness to himself, and that he meant to punish it accordingly.

A belief in this report drove many of the barons to the side of the king, who was marching from Lincoln to Lynn. A conflict of the tide with the current of the Welland caused the loss of his baggage train, with his jewels and his money. He reached Swineshead in a high fever, and five days later (October 19, 1216) he died at Newark.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE REIGN OF HENRY III.

- Election of Henry of Winchester. 1216.** JOHN's successor was his son Henry of Winchester boy nine years old. He was crowned at Gloucester (1216) with a plain circlet of gold, the crown having been lost a few days before his father's death, and the other treasures, at the mouth of the Welland.
- Character of his Reign.** During his long reign of fifty-five years, England was a scene of manifold conflicts. At first it might have been thought that the work of Innocent III. would be more lasting than that of Stephen Langton. John's surrender of his kingdom was not treated by the Pope as a matter of mere form; it became a significant reality in the hands of the papal legates Gualo and Pandulf.
- Results of his Reign** Yet before the reign was closed, the English constitution had assumed in all its essential features its present shape; and it has been well said that



each shire had a right to its own representatives, and it remained only to extend this doctrine to the towns.

As with John, so with Henry, the vices of the king led to greater union among his subjects. Swarms of foreign favourites or of foreign mercenaries quickened their resolution to hold together for their suppression or their expulsion. But by a singular fortune, the greatest of all the actors in this great work during the reign of Henry III. was himself a foreigner, whose training might have seemed the least likely to fit him for such a task.

The first work to be done was to rid the land of the French prince Louis. The issue was decided by the battle of Lincoln (1217); and the departure of the French was followed by a renewal of the charter. It was confirmed again six years later (1223), when a war with the French king seemed again impending. But when he came of age in 1227, Henry soon showed that he had no more liking than his father had for playing the part of a constitutional king.

Each year now as it passed by left him less trusted, more despised, and more hated; and this long series of thirty years (1227-1258), during which his personal government lasted, is marked by few, if any, acts which are not either imprudent or unlawful, or, as from a ruler, wicked.

The need of money suggested to Henry no other expedients than those of extortion; and the chief Justiciary, Hubert de Burgh, set himself to lessen, so far as he might, the evil effects of unlawful or excessive demands. But in 1232 Hubert was driven from office, and left penniless by charges similar to those which Henry II. had brought against his chancellor, Thomas of London (page 131).

**Marriage of
Henry's Sister
to Simon de
Montfort.
1238.**

In 1235 Henry married Eleanor of Provence, and a crowd of her foreign followers hurried across the sea and were rewarded with high offices and dignities. Three years later, the king's sister Eleanor married to Simon de Montfort, son of Simon, I. of Beziers, and afterwards Count of Toulouse, chief leader in the bloody Albigenian crusade.

Henry's Parliaments.

The natural effect of the king's misrule was a discontent expressed in assemblies of barons and bishops which are from this time onwards called Parliaments. On Henry's side there was little more than a monotonous demand for money. Refusal was followed by a fresh request; while all promises of redress remained invariably unfulfilled. Still the very recognition of these demands proved that the king was dependent on the nation, although Henry himself failed to learn the lesson.

**The Provisions
of Oxford.
1258.**

A load of debt, increasing hugely in its mass from year to year, led the king to make to the parliament of 1258 demands which were met by a counter-demand for a commission of twenty-four persons, to whom

the king absolute, although it asserted that all charters should remain valid which had been issued before the Provisions.

This sentence failed to allay the armed strife which had already begun. Still, when the two armies were gathered near the walls of Lewes, the barons offered Henry fifty thousand marks if he would confirm the Provisions. His answer was a defiance, in which his son Edward, with Richard, Earl of Cornwall, king of the Romans, took part.

The battle fought the next day ended in the defeat of the Royalists, and the captivity of the Earl of Cornwall. The king and his son surrendered themselves to De Montfort, who now ruled in Henry's name; and the arbitration, known as the Mise of Lewes, determined the principles on which the government should be carried on (1264).

In the following December the assembly met which is called the Parliament of Simon de Montfort, and to which some representatives of boroughs were summoned. It can scarcely be regarded as a free parliament, for those only were invited who were on the side of the barons. The young prince Edward was set free, on condition of his remaining on his parole or word of honour at Hereford. The breaking of this promise made it clear that another appeal must be made to the sword.

The issue was decided on the field of Evesham, August 4th, 1265. The barons were taken at unawares. Their army was defeated, or rather massacred, and De Montfort himself was slain. The survivors held out for a year at Kenilworth, when, under the title of the Dictum de Kenilworth, an agreement was drawn up for the settlement of differences.

The great storms of this weary reign were over; and

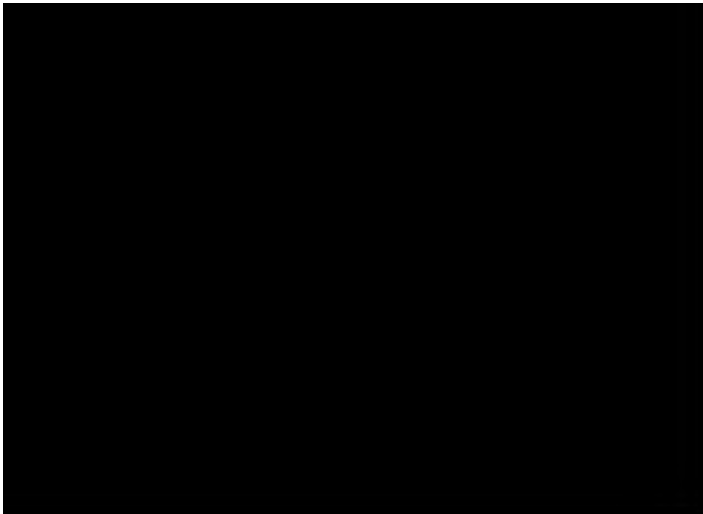
when Henry III. died in 1272, the kingdom was so far quiet that his son Edward was proclaimed king, and the oaths of fealty were taken to him, although he was far away, and had only reached Capua on his return from the ninth crusade.

Twenty years later, Edward candidly acknowledged the justice of the barons' quarrel, and frankly accepted the principle that a full and equal share in the government of the country is the right of all the estates of the land. It is scarcely necessary to say that on this principle rests the great fabric of the English constitution.

CHAPTER LV.

THE REIGN OF EDWARD I.

Relations of Edward with Wales and Scotland.



realized the highest hopes which stirred the heart of Simon de Montfort.

Edward I. was, indeed, a man who must have made his mark on any age, and he was placed in circumstances which drew out all his best qualities, and took away even from his worst acts much of their power for mischief. He was a wise legislator, a prudent statesman, and a vigorous king; and the experience of his earlier years had taught him that real sovereignty must rest on the willing obedience of a nation. Of the nation he had formed a wider idea than perhaps any other man of his age. He was still master of continental possessions; but his eye was turned rather to those parts of his own island over which thus far he could put forth only a feudal claim; and we cannot doubt that the object dearest to his heart was to effect by peaceful means that union of all the people of Great Britain, which he regarded as indispensable for the true welfare of the country.

Aims and Motives of Edward I.

Edward had left Palestine three months before his father's death, A.D. 1272. His valour in the Holy Land may have reawakened memories of the bravery of the Lion-hearted Richard (p. 210). But he had done nothing towards the great object of the Crusade, and he had had a narrow escape from the dagger of an assassin who professed to be doing the will of the Sultan Bibars. The English surgeons skilfully healed a wound from which, according to later stories, his wife Eleanor had with rare devotion sucked the poison.

Crusade of Edward I.

But although he learnt at Capua that he had been duly chosen to fill his father's place, nearly a year and a half more had passed before he set foot on English soil, 1274. His journey had been

Return of Edward I. to England. 1274

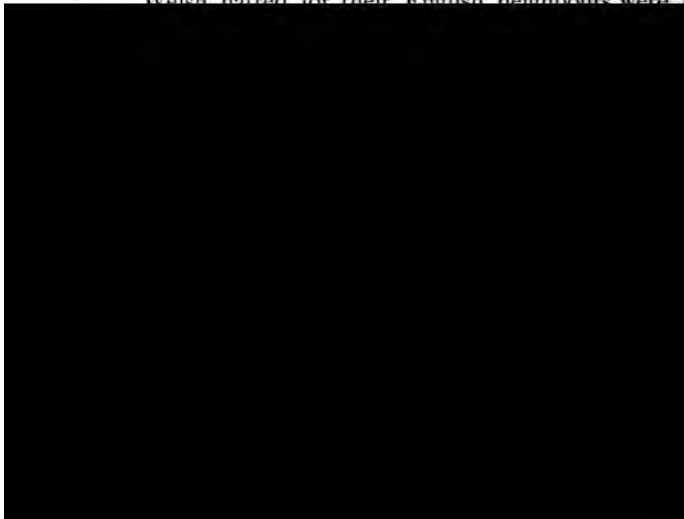
in outward show a long triumphal procession and the treachery of the Count of Chalons, who sought, it is said, to murder him at a tourney served only to show the strength of his arm, and add lustre to his fame as a warrior.

His Coronation.
1274.

The quietness of the kingdom during his prolonged absence proved how much had been achieved by the settlement of Kenilworth (p. 221). It was indeed conclusively proved, as it has been well said, that the crown was no longer the repository of political power. Edward had left the care of his interests in the hands of Roger Mortimer, lord of the Welsh marches, of the archbishop of York, and of his chaplain Robert Burnell; and these three, with the assent of a great assembly of the estates of the realm, the government was carried on until Edward landed at Dover on August 2, 1274. A few days later he was crowned at Westminster.

Affairs on the
Welsh Marches.

He found himself obliged almost immediately to deal with the affairs of Wales. The evil effects of Welsh hatred for their English neighbours were



he supposed that the task of pacifying Wales was practically achieved.

But the privileges of knighthood and grants of large estates in England failed to satisfy David ; and both he and his brother were confirmed in their disaffection by a prediction attributed to Merlin, the prophet in King Arthur's story (p. 29), which declared that a Welsh prince would be crowned in London when English money should become circular. With the issue of a new coinage of halfpennies and farthings, Edward had forbidden the cutting of the penny into halves and quarters, and had thus, it was supposed, prepared the way for the Welsh conquest of England.

Thus fortified, the Welsh princes, during the darkness of night and in a fierce storm, seized the castle of Hawarden, Palm Sunday, March 22, 1282, and their clansmen, pouring down from the mountains, caused fearful havoc on the English borders. For many months the struggle went on, with an amount of success on the Welsh side which tempted Llewellyn to refuse the terms offered by Edward. Surprised in a barn, Llewellyn was slain by an English knight ; and his head, crowned with a wreath of silver or ivy, was fixed on the Tower of London, by way of fulfilling the prophecy of Merlin.

For a time David held out, though the other chiefs had submitted ; but his fastnesses failed to protect him from the treachery of his countrymen, who seized and carried him to the castle of Rhuddlan. Tried before a parliament at Shrewsbury, David was condemned to death with all the horrible penalties attached to treason.

For a year and more Edward remained in Wales, dividing the country into shires and hundreds, introducing English administration of justice, and at the

same time allowing the Welsh to retain their lands subject only to the services on which they already held them. To this time is ascribed the massacre of the Welsh bards, of which the contemporary historians know nothing, and which, assuredly, was not likely to win what Edward specially wished to gain,—the goodwill of the Welsh people.¹

Birth of Edward, Prince of Wales. 1284.

To this time belongs also another event, with which popular fancy busied itself. The child who was afterwards Edward II., was born in the castle Carnarvon, April 25, 1284, and was declared Prince of Wales. Whether his father presented the babe to the Welsh as Welsh by birth, and unable to speak any other language, or whether they hailed the bestowal of this title as virtually the recovery of their own independence, we cannot say; but from that time to the present the principality of Wales has furnished a title for the eldest sons of English sovereigns.

Views of Edward I. for

Five years later, 1289, the commissioners of



kingdom; while Edward on his side declared that Scotland should remain free and without subjection within its ancient limits, and that, if his son and his bride should die childless, the crown should pass to the lawful heir.

This last promise was the first which he was called upon to fulfil. Lacking strength to withstand the hardships of the voyage from Norway to Scotland, the young child was landed and died on one of the Orkney islands. No heir now remained to the last three Scottish kings; and Edward was called on to act as arbiter between a host of claimants, among whom John Balliol, lord of Galloway, Robert Bruce, lord of Annandale, and John Hastings, lord of Abergavenny, sons or grandsons of the three daughters of David, earl of Huntingdon, brother of William the Lion,¹ held the chief place. Balliol urged that he was the grandson of Earl David's eldest daughter; Bruce insisted that he had a better title as son of his second daughter.

At the present day this question would be regarded as one admitting of no debate; but at that time the law of descent was, as we have already seen (pp. 66, 128, 133), not so precisely fixed. The matter was referred to Edward, who willingly accepted the office of arbiter in right of his own crown, which made him lord paramount over the whole island. His claim was not formally opposed, and Edward in his turn demanded of the Pope his recognition of this feudal supremacy. Treating it as a delicate question which affected both the clergy and the laity, the pontiff further objected to any statements which might prejudice the rights which

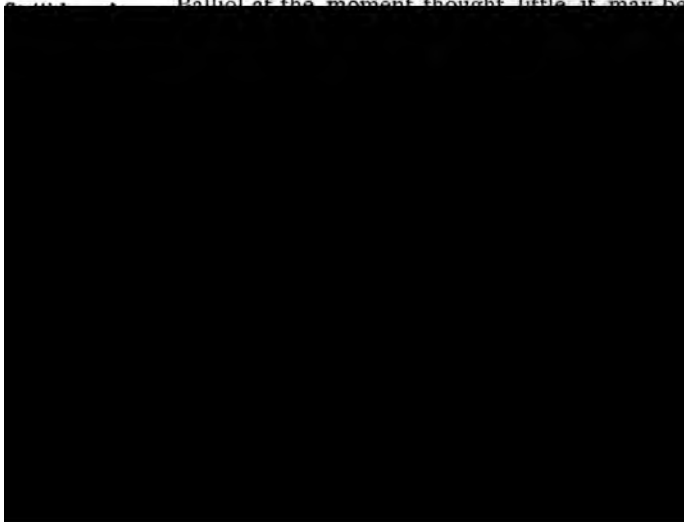
¹ See Genealogy I.

the Roman Church itself possessed in the kingd
of Scotland.

Election of John
Balliol as King
of Scotland.
1292.

Thus by opposing interests was twisted and
twisted the chain of claims put forward without
least reference to the people with whose destin
they professed to deal. Regarded in the clear li
of justice and fairness, the question, as we h
seen (p. 69), is soon settled; but in the days
the Plantagenets such considerations were seld
in the first instance taken into account. A
inquiries which lasted a year and a half, it was deci
that the Scottish kingdom, being, like an earldom
a barony, an indivisible inheritance, must descend
the heir of the eldest daughter of Earl David; a
John Balliol, declared king as such, Nov. 19, 12
swore fealty to Edward, admitting that he held of l
the realm of Scotland, and thus riveting again the ch
which had been broken when the poverty of Richar
constrained him to sell to William the Lion the rig
acquired over the Scottish kingdom by Henry II. (p. 20

Balliol at the moment thought little it may be



A mere personal dispute between an English and a Norman sailor at a place on the French coast favoured and furthered the designs of Philip. The brawl led to a series of fights, and these in the end to a fierce battle of opposing fleets. Philip summoned Edward, as duke of Aquitaine, to appear before him and to make compensation for the misdeeds of his subjects, 1293. Edward proposed to refer the matter to arbitration, and Philip, maintaining that he needed a guarantee, declared that if Gascony should be surrendered to him temporarily he would pledge himself to restore it at the end of forty days.

Quarrel between Edward I. and Philip the Fair. 1293.

The compact was made, but when the time came Philip refused to redeem his pledge; and Edward, telling the people of Guienne that he would soon free them from a yoke which they hated, formally renounced his allegiance to Philip. But foul winds kept at Portsmouth the fleet in which he was ready to sail. The Welsh, thinking that he had left the country, once more carried havoc into the English marches, and received a chastisement of which they never again provoked a repetition.

Renewed Welsh Troubles.

A more serious danger threatened him from Scotland, where the nobles constrained Balliol to make an offensive and defensive alliance with the French king, thus strengthening that connexion and sympathy between Scotland and France which so largely affected the subsequent history of the former. Under the same constraint, Balliol gave no heed to the citation which summoned him to appear before his liege lord.

Alliance between the Scottish and French Kings.

An accident led to open warfare. The capture of Berwick (March 30, 1296) by the English was followed by a terrible massacre of the inhabitants. In requital Balliol renounced his fealty. "Felon fool!" was the answer of Edward; "since he will not come to us,

Battle of Dunbar. 1296.

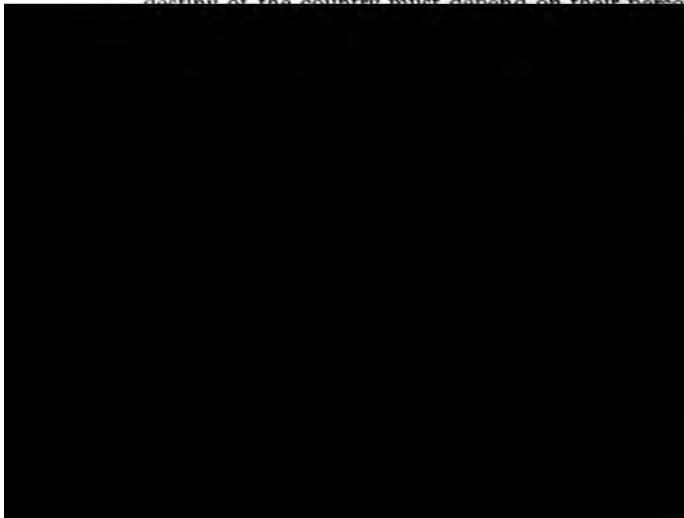
we must go and find him out." The search lasted but a little while. A great victory of the earl Warenne at Dunbar (April 27) proved decisive; and Balliol, appearing before Edward with a white war, expressed his sorrow both for his rebellion and his alliance with the French king.

**Deposition of
John Balliol.**

Unmoved by his contrition, Edward compelled him to declare that on the renunciation of homage the over-lord was entitled to resume possession of his fief. Having thus transferred to Edward the fealty of his own liege subjects, Balliol disappeared not unwillingly, perhaps, from the political world and ended his days, nine years later, a contented exile in France.

**Appearance of
William Wallace.**

The dethronement of Balliol, which struck terror into the hearts of the Scottish barons, served only to quicken the energies of a man who cared nothing for the forms of feudal law. The supposed son of a country gentleman, William Wallace appealed straight to the people, feeling assured that in the future the destiny of the country must depend on their perse-



had left as guardian of Scotland. To the offers of Warenne he answered briefly that he and his men were come not for peace but to free their country. The English general ordered his men to cross the Forth near Stirling by a bridge wide enough for only two abreast. About five thousand had so passed when Wallace let loose his followers upon them. Few escaped the slaughter. Warenne, with the survivors, was compelled to retreat, as best he could, into England, whither they were followed by Wallace and Sir Andrew Moray, who styled themselves generals of the army of John, king of Scotland.

After his victory near Stirling, Wallace, as guardian of the kingdom, convened a parliament at Perth; but the English king had so far arranged matters with his French liege lord that he could now turn his mind to those of Scotland; and the battle of Falkirk (July 22, 1298) proved that his generalship was greater than that of the Scottish leader. Wallace had awaited the battle without misgiving. Having arranged his men, he told them in few words, "I have brought you to the ring; hop if ye can." Nor was he disappointed in their behaviour, until Edward himself came to the rescue of his army. Then followed an awful rout, from which Wallace escaped into the forests.

When from these battlefields we turn to the council chamber, we can scarcely fail to be struck with the weakness or worthlessness of feudal titles. While Wallace was still guardian of the kingdom, the Scots had invoked the aid of the Roman pontiff, who was willing enough to act on their declaration that Scotland belonged of full right to the see of Rome. The Pope reserved to his own decision all matters of controversy then pending between the

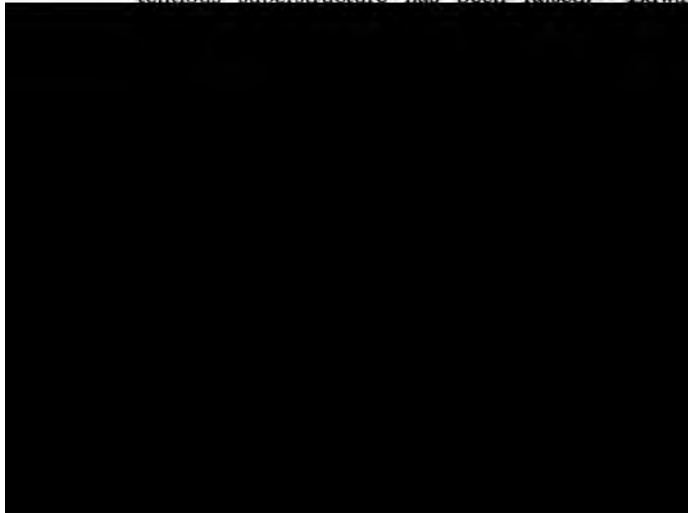
English king and the Scottish kingdom. A parliament which met at Lincoln, dealt summarily with the papal claims. They indignantly refused to allow the king of England to plead in a cause the very institution of which set at naught the rights of the crown and impinged on the liberties of the English people.

References to
Imaginary
Personages
and Events.

Rejecting with his barons the temporal jurisdiction of the Pope, Edward was yet content to seek the favour of the pontiff as a friend. In a long letter he traced back the line of his predecessors to the day of Eli and of Samuel, and rested his own claims on the legislation of Brute the Trojan. This letter presented by the Pope to the Scottish envoy, drew forth a rejoinder which settled the question in reference to successes achieved against the descendants of Brute by those of Scots, the daughter of Pharaoh, and which left it certain that Scotland was the peculiar fief of the Holy See.

Campaign in
Scotland. 1303.

These arguments are not without interest, as showing the nature of the foundations on which many a pretentious superstructure has been raised. Edward



to which Edward had at first condemned them, and were sent as prisoners to England.

Hither also, after no long interval, Wallace himself was brought. Before the bar in Westminster Hall he was charged with the crimes of treason, murder, and robbery. To the two last counts he pleaded guilty; but as to these it would be difficult to prove the jurisdiction of the court which tried him, unless the fact of his treason was established. Of treason Wallace asserted that he was not, and could not be, guilty, as he had never sworn fealty to the English king, or made any engagement with him. In this plea he was saying nothing more than the truth; but his words were unheeded. Wallace was executed, Aug. 24, 1305, and became at once in the eyes of his countrymen the martyr of Scottish freedom and independence.

These great military and political enterprises involved the need of both men and money on a large scale. In other words, in so far as he had not the money, and could not pay the men himself, Edward was brought into direct relations with his people, who alone could effectually help him. In previous reigns the kings had sent commissions of judges, who determined in the several counties or towns the amount to be paid by each. It might be dangerous to refuse their request; but the mere fact that the request was made implied the power of refusal if the people chose to run the risk. At the least, it left them free to state their own side of the case, or, in other words, to ask for a redress of grievances in return for their aid in money or in goods. The summoning of assemblies more or less representative, for the business of taxation, was found to be far more convenient and expeditious than the cumbersome plan of judicial commissions,

and these assemblies passed through several stages each developing more clearly the principle of representation, until at last the first parliament, identical in all essential respects with the parliaments of our own time, met in 1295.

The Three Estates of the Realm.

It was not likely that this great instrument of national government could be adjusted in all parts without many collisions and controversies. The relations of the king to his subjects must be accurately determined; the rights of the three estates of the realm—the lords, the commons, and the clergy—must be carefully defined. The work was always carried on with scrupulous fairness; and even the king was tempted to wink at or to justify abuses which did not immediately affect himself. The bitter dispute of Edward's reign was with the clergy, who were loudest in their praise of his worst acts of tyranny.

The Jews in England.

The English kings had found one source of weakness in the communities of Jews resident in England. The people, entangled with them in the relations



Edward, urged on by his need of money, at last (July 27, 1290) issued an order for the expulsion of every Jew from his dominions. They were allowed to take their money and their goods, and, so laden, a multitude of more than 16,000 persons reached the sea-coast. But, once on board, they were at the mercy of the ships' captains, who plundered or murdered them or left them on sandbanks, bidding them find another Moses to make a path for them through the waters. It is but fair to add that those who were convicted of these crimes were punished.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE REIGN OF EDWARD I. (*continued*).

Edward and the People of England.

THE clergy, who lauded the expulsion of the Jews as a signal act of Christian zeal, offered the king a tenth of the value of their movable goods; the laity offered a fifteenth. Both were to be made to feel that they might, to say the least, have done more wisely. The Londoners were induced to submit to a very heavy contribution. Commissioners, sent to all the other towns, bade them follow the example of London. But before the clergy Edward appeared in person, and told them bluntly that his costly wars compelled him to demand of them the half of their income from all sources.

Then followed a struggle not altogether unlike that which Henry II. had maintained with Thomas of London (chaps. xlix., l.). Remonstrances were useless. The Dean of St. Paul's, attempting


Demands of Edward I. on the People and on the Clergy.

Appeal of the Clergy to the Pope.

added to the charters already obtained a provision that the subject should not be taxed in any way without his own consent. It is true, indeed, that this principle had been laid down in Magna Charta itself; but it had been held to bear so hardly on the royal prerogative that at the beginning of the reign of Henry III. it had been reserved for further consideration, and thus far he and his son had kept it in abeyance. But it was necessary now either to accept it unreservedly, or to come to an open breach with his subjects. After a severe struggle, and many protests, Edward wisely chose the former course, and bound himself to observe the charters with this addition (Nov. 5, 1297).

Appeal of Edward I. to the Pope.

Edward's tomb in the abbey church of Westminster exhibits as his motto the words "Pactum serva" (keep thy word). How far he himself obeyed the precept, it may be difficult to say. Some years later, May 1304, he was again raising money by a commission of judges sent to the boroughs and shires; and about the same time it seems that he complained to the



those of continental Europe; but the process of growth had been very different. In Italy and Southern Gaul, the cities retained their original constitution as municipalities of the empire; in England the imperial system had been swept utterly away, and the town was simply a spot where the inhabitants of a lordship clustered together for the sake of protection or convenience of trade. The people thus massed were governed precisely as the inhabitants of any neighbouring lordship, and at first they had probably no other occupations. It was the collective home of an agricultural community. The earliest Doms of London relate to the recovery of cattle belonging to the citizens.

But as time went on, and the town grew rich, there sprang up around these original landholders a population which had no share in their property or in the privileges involved in it. These landholders thus became the chief or governing body, which assessed the burdens to be borne by all who dwelt within the limits of their jurisdiction. Their own freedom had been won by their prudence and thrift. The services which they had been bound to render to the lords of the manor had been lessened, and in the end extinguished, by payments of money, for which a stringent acknowledgment was in every case insisted on. These concessions were extorted by the principle of association, which had been confined at first to the members of a family, and afterwards extended first to a union of families in frith-gilds, and then to a union of frith-gilds in the borough or city. The same law applied to all,—“Let all share the same lot; if any misdo, let all bear it.”

But although the trades carried on in the town were being continually multiplied, the regulation of trade,

**The Land-
holders of the
Towns.**

**The Internal
Government
of the Towns.**

with all questions of taxation and internal government, remained in the hands of the original holders of the town. Everything, indeed, tended to give greater importance to these magnates of whom was now called the merchant-guild, in contradistinction to the craft-guilds or societies of men plying different trades, each of which had its own strictly defined limits. The whole world of commerce and speculation was open to the members of the merchant-guild; but the guild of tailors could not interfere with the guild of the cutlers, and an adequate protection for each could be found only in the issuing of royal charters.

Rising of William Long-beard in the Time of Richard I.

In many cases, probably from an instinctive feeling which was justified in the end, the issuing of these documents was stoutly resisted by the merchant magnates, and the oppression involved in this resistance had led, in the time of Richard I., to an insurrection headed by William of the Long Beard, known also as Fitz-Osbert (p. 211), himself one of the governing class. Richard personally was not inclined to favour his cause; but William set too

as he fell, and for many years his work seemed to have gone for nothing.

Edward's military enterprises against the Welsh had been almost uniformly successful. His great and long-continued efforts for the reduction of Scotland ended in comparative failure. The death of Balliol (p. 230) had left to his nephew, John Comyn of Badenoch, such rights to the crown as he might be said to possess. Comyn's great rival was Robert Bruce, the grandson of that Robert Bruce who had come forth as a competitor for the Scottish crown on the death of the Maid of Norway (p. 226).

Rival Claims for
the Scottish
Crown.

In February 1306, these two met by agreement for a private conference in the church of the Minorites at Dumfries. What passed between them is known to none, but Bruce appeared presently at the church door in manifest excitement. To the questions of his followers he answered that he thought he had killed Comyn. "You only think so," was the retort of one of them, who, hurrying into the building, made sure that the work of murder was done by plunging his dagger into Comyn's heart.

Murder of Comyn
by Robert
Bruce. 1306.

The crime was a defiance of the English king, and as such Edward construed it. Bruce had, indeed, but one choice left to him. He must either justify his act by success, or fail irretrievably; he therefore took the name of king, and was crowned at Scone. His wife, when she heard of this event, expressed, it is said, the hope that he who was a king in summer might not be an exile in winter. Within three months Bruce found refuge in Ireland, having narrowly escaped capture by Edward's lieutenant, the earl of Pembroke.

Coronation of
Robert Bruce
at Scone.

But Edward himself was prostrate from weakness, and when, in the following spring, Bruce reappeared in

Death of Ed-
ward I. 1307.

Scotland, he was scarcely able to sit on his horse. Ordering his army to advance, he reached Burgh the-Sands, where he died, July 7, 1307.

**His Character
and Motives.**

Edward was sixty-eight years of age, and he reigned thirty-four years. He left behind him a reputation as great as that of his father was contemptible; and, whatever may be our doubts of his sincerity at certain stages of his career, his conduct as a lawgiver, a statesman, and a general, insured the future greatness of the country whose true interest he unquestionably had at heart. He was on the whole fortunate in the circumstances under which he lived. His subjects were growing in wealth, the glory of a living school of strictly national architecture was shedding its splendour over the whole land.

**Architecture of
the Age of
Edward I.**

It may indeed be said that no age or country in the world has witnessed a development of architecture so magnificent and so truthful as that which delighted the eyes of Englishmen in the churches of Westminster and Salisbury, and in a host of other buildings, even one of which had its own characteristic beauty.



CHAPTER LVII.

THE REIGN OF EDWARD II.

It was one thing to lay down the principle of representation as the basis of national government ; it was another thing to insure the maintenance and application of this principle from year to year. The several estates of the realm might be anxious enough to uphold each its own special privileges. But it was not easy to convince the barons, at least, that it was wrong to take a part for the whole, and to act as though they themselves constituted the nation ; and, until each portion of the people should learn to take count of the rest, the misgovernment which must be the fruit of discord and illegality was inevitable.

Pretensions of
the Barons.

Of Edward II., who, as he had begun life, ended it as Edward of Carnarvon, it is perhaps enough to say that he never had any real sense of his responsibility as a king or as a man, or felt that each man has to think and act for himself in obedience to his duty. Some have held that he was not a vicious man, others have charged him with the most infamous of vices, and the balance will always incline to the unfavourable side in the case of men who show that they can never stand alone. Edward was constantly under the dominion of favourites, and of these the first was Piers de Gaveston, whom Edward I. had himself brought from Guienne to share the education of the prince of Wales.

Edward and his
Favourites.

Edward I. lived long enough to regret what he had done, and to remedy the mischief so far as he could. He sent Gaveston home, and made his son promise never to recall him without the royal consent. Three

Marriage of Ed-
ward II. and
Isabella. 1308.

months later Edward died, and his son at once recalled his friend, whom he created earl of Cornwall. Early in the following year Edward II. married Isabella, the daughter of the French king; and when on his return from France he was met by the English barons, he astonished all by rushing into the arms of his favourite, whom he kissed and called his brother. A fresh grievance was given when at his coronation the privilege of bearing the crown in front of the king was granted to Gaveston.

Gaveston and
the Commons
of England.

Within three months Gaveston was banished, and pledged himself never to return; but the barons who opposed him had scarcely thought of him as gone when they heard that he had been appointed governor of Ireland, June 1308. The Commons, to whom the king applied for money, insisted for the first time that redress of grievances must precede the grant. Edward promised to consider their demand and dismissed them; but he could not live without Gaveston. From the Pope he obtained an absolution for Gaveston's oath, provided he answered to the

and therefore could not come. Hard pressed for lack of money, Edward assented (1310) to the appointment of a committee of peers as Ordainers, who received their powers of government for a limited time.

At the end of that time he was compelled to sign the articles in which they named the various grievances calling for redress (1311). Once more Gaveston was banished, and left the country for Flanders. In a few weeks it became known that he had joined the king at York. At the same time a royal proclamation declared him to be a true and loyal subject, who was ready to maintain his innocence against all accusers (1312).

Gaveston and
the King at
York. 1311.

Edward was overtaking the patience of the barons, who appeared in arms under the earl of Lancaster as their leader. With his favourite he fled to Scarborough (May 1312), where Gaveston was compelled to surrender himself to the earl of Pembroke, under a promise that, if nothing should be arranged before the first of August, he should again be placed in possession of Scarborough Castle. But the "black dog," as Gaveston called Lancaster, had sworn that the favourite should feel his teeth, and a council met at Warwick to decide his fate. A proposal to spare his life called forth the reply, "If you let the fox go when you have caught him, you will have to hunt him again." Gaveston was beheaded.

Surrender and
Execution of
Gaveston. c
1312.

Edward's grief settled down into a fixed purpose of revenge, but he had little power of directing the course of events. Dangers again threatened his kingdom from the north. Robert Bruce, the Scottish king (p. 241), had seized or reduced castle after castle, and the governor of Stirling had agreed to surrender that fortress if he should not be relieved

Invasion of
Scotland. c

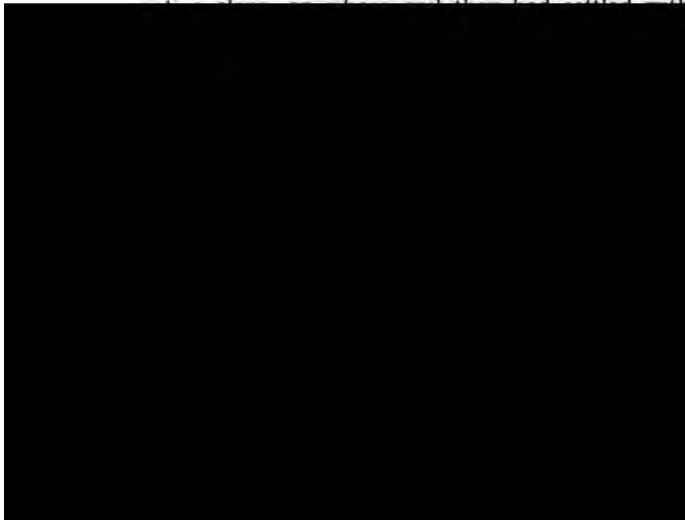
before the feast of St. John the Baptist. On the eve of the festival, Edward approached the low land watered by the burn or stream of the Bannock, with an army of which the numbers have been immensely exaggerated. But Bruce had made his arrangements with skill, and his people were full of enthusiasm. The abbot of Inchaffray marched barefoot before them to the battlefield. As he prayed, the men fell on their knees. Some of the English construed this as an appeal to their mercy. "Do not deceive yourselves," cried Ingelram of Umfraville; "they beg for mercy, but they ask it of God."

**Battle of Bannockburn.
1314.**

Of the battle itself the contradictory accounts prove only that it was hotly contested, and that it ended with the complete defeat of the English. Stirred to still greater zeal by their victory, the Scots resolved to free Ireland also from English rule.

**The Condition
of Ireland.**

The state of that island was pitiable indeed. The English conquerors were sowing the wind, and the harvest of whirlwind was not slow in ripening. The



O'Neal, who called himself hereditary monarch of Ireland, transferred his rights to Edward Bruce, who was at once crowned. The success of the Scotch in Ireland was but partial. Robert Bruce landed in Ulster, only to return to Scotland in a few months, after a campaign which produced no results (1317). His brother Edward fell in battle not long afterwards (October, 1318); and the supremacy of the English was restored within the isle.

But the condition of England was becoming scarcely less dreadful than that of Ireland. The country was wasted by pestilence and famine. The misery of the poor was frightful; troops of dependents and hangers-on, driven from the castles, betook themselves to robbery in armed bands; and violent crime on one side led to still more violent revenge and punishment on the other.

Disorder and
Misery in
England.

Edward II. was not a man to profit by experience. The events which were passing round him pointed out his duty with sufficient clearness; but he was now in bondage to another favourite, a less unworthy man, indeed, than Gaveston, yet not more acceptable to those whom he supplanted. Hugh Despenser, to whom Edward gave the county of Glamorgan with the hand of its heiress, was the grandson of the Despenser who fell with De Montfort at Evesham, and his father was one of the most powerful of the English barons. All three bore the same Christian name.

Infatuation of
Edward II.


The favour shown by the king to Despenser roused the jealousy of Lancaster and his confederates, who in an irregular parliament at Westminster decreed the banishment of both the Despensers. Within a few months they had returned to England; and Lancaster, having first retreated towards the north and entered

The King and
the Despensers.

into correspondence with the Scottish king, had been taken prisoner and brought before Edward at Pontefract. Edward was resolved to show no mercy, and the death of Gaveston was avenged by the execution of Lancaster (May 22, 1322). The eldest son, Spenser, created earl of Winchester, received so few forfeited estates to compensate him for his losses in the king's service. The younger, by his arrogance, converted the return of good fortune into a source of fresh misery and ruin.

Departure of
the Queen to
France. 1325.

A truce for thirteen years between England and Scotland in 1323 seemed to open a prospect of quieter times for Edward. But the partisans of Lancaster were on the watch for opportunities of revenge. The most active among them, Roger Mortimer, lord of Wigmore, escaped to France. A quarrel broke out with the French king, and a suggestion that the latter would be most easily swayed by the personal intercession of a sister, induced Edward to consent to the departure of his queen to the French court (1325).



king, putting himself on board a ship, tried to reach the island of Lundy.

Meanwhile Isabella besieged the castle of Bristol, and on the third day received the submission of the elder Despenser, earl of Winchester. The old man (he was now ninety-three years of age) was condemned and executed; and a second proclamation was issued summoning Edward to return and resume his office as king.

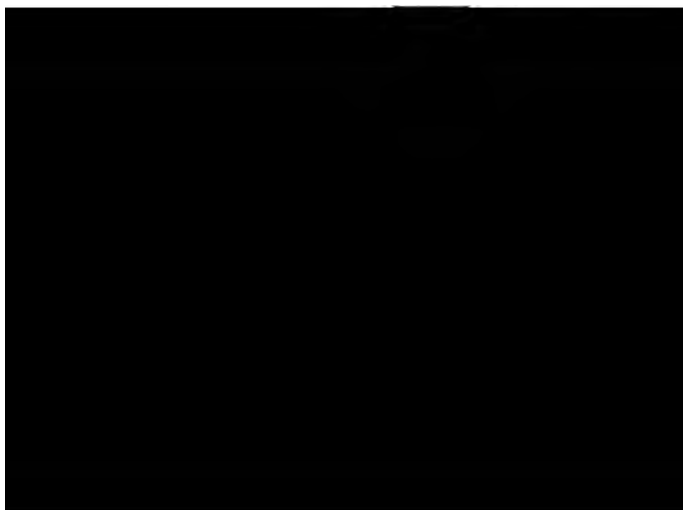
The next step of the queen's partisans was to appoint Prince Edward guardian of the kingdom in the name of his father, who was now a prisoner. The younger Despenser had been tried before Trussel, a judge appointed by the queen, and had been condemned and executed with special insults and indignities. The peers who sided with Isabella went on to deal with the king. They fearlessly revived, we are told, the constitutional usage of the earlier English freedom, and asserted their right to depose a king who had proved himself unworthy to rule. The question is whether the parliament or council so formed was an assembly really representing the nation. On January 8, 1327, the young prince of Wales was declared king by acclamation, and presented as such to the crowd gathered before Westminster Hall. On the 18th, six articles were exhibited against his father, and in the presence of the young Prince, seated on the throne, it was resolved that the reign of Edward of Carnarvon had come to an end.

The reports of the sequel are inconsistent and in part contradictory. According to some, Edward declared that no act of his could be regarded as free so long as he was in durance. By others he is represented as submitting quietly to his sentence, and as thanking the peers for continuing the crown in

his family. On hearing this, Trussel, the judge who had condemned the Despensers, informed him that henceforth he would be treated only as a private person, and the steward of the royal household brought his staff of office as on the death of the sovereign.

Murder of Edward in Berkeley Castle.

Whatever may have been the real character of these incidents, it is certain that to the people's resignation was described as wholly voluntary, and made with the consent of his parliament. The method adopted in dealing with him was scarcely that which would be applied to one who really wished to be free of the cares of kingship. He was carried from castle to castle, to hide the place of his confinement, and at last was foully murdered in Berkeley Castle. No attempt was made to bring home the crime to the murderers, or even to discover them. The body of the king was buried in the abbey church of St. Peter at Gloucester, where a canopy of exquisite grace and beauty overshadows his recumbent effigy.



and even to Edward II., under the lure of Welsh or Scottish conquest. They were ready to make even larger sacrifices, when they were led to hope that all the dominions of the French king might pass into the hands of their own princes.

The shadows which darkened the beginning of his reign were gloomy enough. The disgrace of his mother in her relations with Roger Mortimer was a public scandal. The unconcealed designs of the Scottish king provoked an English invasion, which for Edward ended ignominiously in a peace obtained on condition of his renouncing for himself and his successors all claims of feudal lordship over the Scottish crown. Robert Bruce was now an independent sovereign; but Edward felt that he himself was merely an instrument in the hands of Mortimer and of his mother.

Robert Bruce,
King of Scot-
land.

He resolved on breaking the yoke, and with the aid of Lord Montacute he succeeded in seizing the favourite within the walls of Nottingham Castle. Rushing out from her room on hearing the sounds which accompanied his capture, Isabella entreated her son to spare her gentle Mortimer, whom she termed a worthy knight and her dearest friend. By way of reply Edward summoned a parliament, which, meeting at Westminster, condemned him to death as a traitor (1328). Isabella spent the rest of her worthless life at the manor of Risings. A letter in which Edward asked the advice of the Pope for the regulation of his future life, called forth the judicious and needful counsel that, avoiding all favouritism, he should govern according to the judgment of his barons, prelates, and commons.

Execution of
Mortimer.
1328.

In the north there was a threatening of serious troubles. Edward Balliol, the son and heir of John

Troubles in
Scotland.

Balliol (p. 227), was ready to avail himself of any opportunity for re-asserting his claims. David, the son of Robert Bruce, was a child six years old. His crown had been declared independent; but the admission that the Scottish kingdom was a fief of the English over-lord might, the English king thought, be obtained from Edward Balliol, who was ready to maintain by force of arms the rights of his father, John Balliol.

Battle of Halidon Hill. 1333.

Strange successes, and disasters not less strange, marked the career of this Edward Balliol. He was crowned at Scone in the summer of 1332; in December he was a helpless fugitive. But the English king won a great victory at Halidon Hill (1333), and Edward Balliol, replaced on the Scottish throne, not only renewed his allegiance to Edward III., but made over to him the whole country lying to the east of a line drawn from Dumfries to Linlithgow.

Claims of Edward on the French Crown.

Balliol depended on the support of his English over-lord; and this support was withdrawn when Edward III. found himself involved in a struggle with Philip V., king of France. The death of Charles IV. in 1328 left the French crown in the same condition in which the Scottish crown had been left on the death of the Maid of Norway (p. 226). It was claimed by Philip as a grandson of Philip III., in right of his father, Charles of Valois; and this right was challenged by the English Edward as son of Isabella, daughter of Philip IV., the elder brother of Charles of Valois.¹

Dispute as to the interpretation of the Salic Law.

The French law, commonly known as the Salic law, forbade the descent of the crown to females; but Edward contended that, although his mother could not reign herself, she could hand on the right of succession to her son. The contention on the other side was that a woman, having no right, could

¹ See Genealogy II.

not hand down her right to any one. Edward resolved to maintain his claim by force, and the two countries were committed to a costly and disastrous struggle, which lasted with interruptions for a hundred years.

The struggle was for a prize which dazzled the imagination of the English, and in the same measure it retarded the political and social growth of the country. The first incident was a great naval victory won by Edward on the Flemish coast at (Sluys 1340). The second was a dispute with his ministers, whom he charged with intercepting the supplies needed to carry on his enterprise. But a new parliament followed the precedent already set (p. 237) of demanding redress of grievances before making any grant. The king yielded all that they asked; but he had convinced himself that so long as the sovereign, acting under what he was pleased to regard as constraint, made promises with the deliberate intention of breaking them, he was justified in so doing.

It seemed likely that Edward's plans might be nipped almost in the bud; but the death of John III., Duke of Brittany, furnished an opportunity for renewing the strife. The case was again one of disputed succession. The French king maintained the cause of the duke's grand-daughter, while Edward upheld the claims of the duke's brother. Edward was thus insisting on the application of the Salic law, against which in his own case he had protested, to a matter with which it had never been concerned. What this law barred to women was succession not to a fief but to a throne.

Nations cannot fight long without learning to hate each other; and this lesson was soon learnt by the French and the English. Whatever might come of

it, Edward's enterprise spread mischief and mis-
everywhere. It led to tumults in Flanders, wh
proved fatal to James of Artevelde, who had offe
the Flemish crown to the Black Prince of Wa
(1338); it filled the towns and villages of Norma
with blood, and brought about a horrible slaught
on the field of Creci (1346).

**Battle of Creci
(Cressy). Aug.
14, 1346.**

This battle was fought after encountering gr
difficulties and at tremendous hazards. The Eng
were enormously outnumbered by the French,—if
latter be taken even at the lowest reckoning,—and
French had among them a body of Genoese arch
who were supposed to be almost invincible. Th
men had much to do with the issue of the day.

**Choice of the
Battlefield.**

On the English side the field was well cho
On the French side all was confusion and disor
The English had been refreshed by a night's rest,
the king, who had in the evening entertained
chief leaders at a banquet, bade his men to "ea
their ease and drink a cup," before they made re
for the conflict. The French had to pass at c

battle, however, was not yet lost; and the heaviest pressure was brought to bear on the forces under the command of the young prince of Wales. A hurried request for aid drew from king Edward the question, "Is my son killed? or is he wounded?" On hearing that he was thus far unhurt, he refused to send him any help, adding that the boy must be left to win his spurs for himself. The battle soon became a merciless carnage, in which no quarter was given on either side. The ground was covered with the bodies of nobles and knights, amongst whom were the Duke of Alençon, the brother of the French sovereign, and the blind old king, John of Bohemia, whose last command to those about him had been, that they should lead him into the thick of the fight, there to strike a blow for his friend and die.

The battle had lasted barely three hours, when the English king greeted his son as a victor worthy of himself and of the crown. Henceforth the boy, who had fought in black armour, was known, it is said, as the Black Prince. In the school of bravery he had learnt his lesson well; but the lesson of mercy was seldom taught or acted on. On the morning after the fight, thousands of Frenchmen, we are told, who had passed the night under trees and hedges, were pitilessly put to death, and some new French levies, seeking their way through a heavy mist, were also indiscriminately slaughtered.

Exploits of the
Black Prince.

For the present Edward was sailing on the full tide of success. An invasion of England by the Scottish king David was avenged on the field of Nevil's Cross (1346), and David himself was brought as a prisoner to the Tower of London. A protracted siege of many months ended in the unconditional surrender of Calais (*August 4, 1347*). The besieged had struggled

Surrender of
Calais. 1347.

hard to obtain terms, and Edward's stern refusal seemed a menace of general massacre. But a citizen named Eustace, and five others, offered to stake their lives, we are told, for the safety of the town, and were delivered from the stroke of the executioner only by the intercession of Edward's queen, Philippa. It is but fair to add that Calais, thus wrested from the French king, flourished as it had never flourished before, during the two centuries of its occupation by the English conquerors.

The English Archers, and the Introduction of Gunpowder.

The fight of Creci and the operations which preceded it are remarkable in two ways. The fact that the victory of the English was due mainly to the English archers, shows that the real power of the state was already passing from the hands of nobles and knights to those of the people at large; and the employment of cannon with gunpowder, of which we now first hear, pointed to a still greater revolution in warfare. This momentous change was to reduce the panoplied knights to the level of the unarmoured peasant, and so to sweep away the whole system of chivalry.

Extravagance of the King and the People.

The events which had brought misery and ruin to France seemed to introduce in England a carnival of prosperity, which soon took the shape of heedless and wanton folly. The heads of the king and the people alike appeared to be turned. Edward himself was seen at tournaments, which were held almost daily, in absurdly extravagant costumes. The clergy imitated the fashions of soldiers, the women aped the attire of men. Looking on himself as a second Arthur among his Knights of the Round Table, Edward resolved, it is said, to institute a new order of chivalry; and his choice of a badge and motto was determined by the dropping of the Countess of Salis-

duy's garter. The king checked the broad jests of the courtiers by buckling the garter round his own knee, exclaiming, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense !*" (Evil be to the man who thinks ill of this.)

This heyday of jollity was soon turned into mourning and dismay by a visitation which had long been working its way slowly, as all great pestilences have done, from the east. In 1347, the plague, which the historians of the time speak of as the Black Death, reached Constantinople; thence it advanced surely and with quickened pace until it reached not England merely, but Iceland and even Greenland. It carried off most of its victims in two or three days, many of them in five or six hours. There is no doubt that the disease was essentially the same as the plague, which, although now happily banished from England, still lurks in Egypt and the Levant.

Outbreak of the
Plague. 1348.

The physical and moral effects of this malady were in England not very different perhaps from the effects produced by great epidemics elsewhere. Whether the thoughtless jollification of the preceding months had anything to do with hastening or aggravating the pestilence we cannot say; but it is certain that the outbreak was accompanied by a general and extreme depression, which predisposed people to the disease. There was the usual terror and the usual demoralization; and in the midst of this mortal gony were seen the Flagellants—fanatics, both men and women, who, with their bodies bare to the waist, paced the streets, scourging themselves with rods till the blood ran in streams from their shoulders, and singing hymns which excited them to the infliction of new self-tortures.

Effects of the
Pestilence.

The havoc wrought by this dire pest can be only approximately estimated. Fifty thousand bodies, we

Extent of the
Mortality.

are told, were buried in the Hospital Croft of Bartholomew in London; but this croft was purchased by Sir Walter Manny, and set apart for burials, only when the London graveyards were crowded. The population of London, when the plague had ceased, was returned as only 35,000. Norwich scarcely any of the inhabitants remained alive; in Yarmouth seven thousand out of ten thousand were swept away. Nor were its ravages confined to human beings only. Men and brutes were impartially struck down; and the Scotch, who at first thought themselves safe, and made a mock at the 'foul death' of the English, found that the devils had no regard for boundaries, and were smitten severely as Englishmen or Frenchmen.

**Social Results
of the Plague.**

Socially the pestilence brought about results altogether unlooked for. The removal of half the population enormously increased the value of labour, and depreciated in the same proportion the value of land. The change bewildered the landowners, and led them to think that legislation would be necessary to regulate the new state of things.

their interests ; and the societies so formed were virtually trades-unions, like those which Parliament has sanctioned within the last thirty years. But the parliament of Edward's time was unable to see that the rate of wages was a matter with which they were not competent to deal, and they passed acts imposing heavy penalties on all who withdrew themselves, as the phrase went, from due service.

Such persons, when caught, were to be compelled to "make gree" to the man from whose service they had fled, and were also to be branded in the forehead as fugitives, with a mark bearing such resemblance as might be practicable to the letter F. The king and his parliament were both enacting that a man should not have a fair day's wage for a fair day's labour ; and on this text there were not to be wanting preachers in the reign of his grandson, Richard II.

**Penal Regula-
tion of Labour.**

Another deadly blow was thus dealt on the system of feudalism. The great landowners found it impossible to cultivate their own lands, as they had thus far done. At first they let their farms, with the whole stock and implements belonging to them, at a fixed rent ; but after a time there sprang up a class of tenant-farmers, who provided their own implements and stock, much after the custom of our own time. Had the growth of this class continued unchecked, the result would have been a general peasant-proprietorship, such as may be seen in some parts of Europe ; but in England it was found to be more profitable to grow wool than corn, and so large portions of the country were laid down in permanent pasture, on which one shepherd with his dog could with ease do the work of fifty labourers.

**The Land-
owners and
the Tenant-
Farmers.**

The Statutes of Labourers, which dealt with these questions, were not the only important enactments

**Statute of Treas-
ons.**

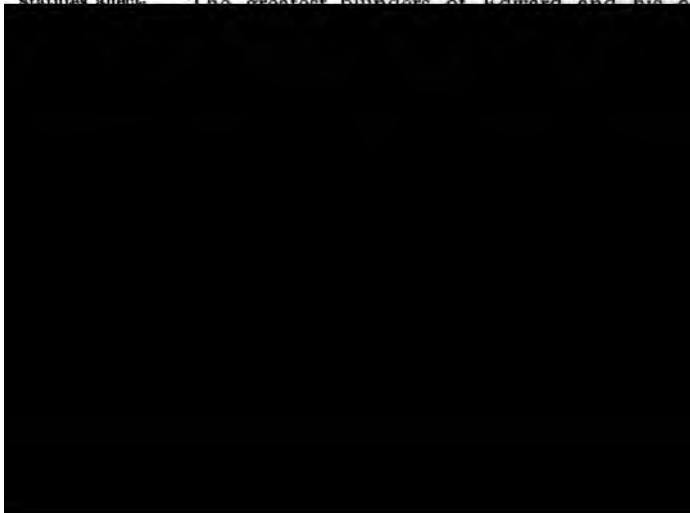
passed shortly after the cessation of this horrid pestilence. The king and his judges had found law of treason to be a very convenient instrument adding to the royal power and revenue. Almost any offence might be construed as treason; and the life of any one so convicted passed not to the lord, but to the king. The statute of treasons rigidly defined the limits of the crime; and the definition thus given has been accepted from that time to the present.

Statutes of Purveyors and Provisors. 1352.

The same parliament (1352) which passed the statute of treasons, passed also the statutes of Purveyors and of Provisors. The former were royal officers, who laid requisitions on the country for the supplies needed for the royal household. The latter were foreign ecclesiastics, whom the Pope thrust into English benefices. The powers of the former were now by statute strictly limited; the latter were rendered incapable of holding preferment in England and were made liable to imprisonment if they offended against the law.

Statutes affecting

The greatest blunders of Edward and his



CHAPTER LIX.

THE REIGN OF EDWARD III. (*continued*)*Renewal of the Struggle with France.*

FOR a time there seemed to be ground for hoping that the truce made after the capture of Calais by the English might lead to a permanent peace; but the rejection of Edward's offer to abandon his pretensions to the French crown, if he were declared sovereign in the territories which he ruled as vassal of the French king, led to a renewal of the strife, or, in other words, to systematic but unskilled devastation. Little of generalship was shown on either side.

Renewal of the
French War.

A halo of romance has been cast around the exploits of the Black Prince; but his campaigns were remarkable chiefly for their rashness, and his victories were due rather to sheer hard fighting than to the military talent which seeks to secure the greatest success at the least cost of labour and bloodshed. Whatever glory could be attained by laying in ashes five hundred cities, towns, and villages, that glory was won by the prince of Wales in the campaign of 1355.

Campaign of
the Black
Prince. 1355.


The campaign of 1356 was rendered memorable by the English victory at Poitiers; but in this enterprise king Edward had no personal share. He had been summoned to the north to beat back a Scottish invasion; and the memory of the terrible vengeance which he took in ravaging the Lothians was preserved in the name, "Burnt Candlemas," given to this miserable time. The affairs of Scotland were in some measure settled, partly by agreement with Edward Balliol, who surrendered such rights as he had in

Invasion of Scot-
land. Ravaging
of the Lothians.
1356.

return for a pension, and later on by the release of the captive king David, with the stipulation of a heavy ransom. The English king had also to obtain means for carrying on his war on the Continent ; and these resources he gained by a larger subsidy than any thus far granted to him, that, namely, of five shillings on each sack of wool exported.

French Campaign of the Black Prince. 1356.

Meanwhile, when the prince of Wales, marching from Bordeaux, renewed his career of devastation against the French king John, thinking that the campaign was directed against Paris, took up his position at Chartres. In truth, the Black Prince had no more definite purpose than that of joining an English force which was to bear down from Normandy. When, after the reduction of Romorantin (the northernmost point which he reached), he began his retreat towards Bordeaux, he was unaware that the French army was advancing on a line parallel to his own. Even when he reached the Loire, at the village of Chauvigny, he did not know that the enemy had crossed the bridge some hours before he reached



clothed with vineyards surrounded by hedges, furnished an excellent cover for archers and infantry, while it left no access for an enemy, except along one narrow lane, along which not more than four horsemen could march abreast.

Here, with 8000 men, a mere handful as compared with the brilliant and well-appointed host in the plain beneath him, prince Edward resolved to make his stand. The enemy were in very different case from the forces which had been mowed down at Creci. Instead of being dispirited by haste, weariness, and hunger, they were tempted by confident hope of success to disregard precautions which in common prudence ought never to be neglected.

A conflict seemed inevitable ; but there were still some who trusted and strove that it might be avoided. The cardinal of Perigord, pointing out to the French king the utter insignificance of the forces opposed to his own, asked leave to go and press upon the English leaders the folly of resistance. He found Edward not unwilling to agree with him. Two days were spent in negotiation, and the cardinal was rejoicing in the thought that peace might be made on condition that the Black Prince should surrender all places taken by him, and free all his prisoners without ransom, when some misguided counsellors, whose advice was taken, insisted that the Black Prince and a hundred English knights should surrender themselves as prisoners.

These terms the prince indignantly refused. To the cardinal of Perigord he declared that he commended himself to God, who would defend the right. Then, falling on his knees, he prayed that God would keep his people from hurt, and added, "Thou knowest that I have a good cause !" The battle began by an advance of 300 picked French knights along the

narrow lane. They were not to have an opportunity of striking a blow in defence of their lives. The English arrows smote their horses as they advanced, and pierced the armour of their riders. The narrow way was forthwith blocked by a mass of dead, which, as the hail of arrows went ceaselessly on, became every moment more dense by the pressure from behind.

Capture of the
French King
John.

For the English the battle was little more than slaughter. An ambush of 600 men, placed by the Black Prince behind the hill, came down on the troops of the Duke of Normandy, just as they were beginning to waver, and this completed the confusion of the French army. Personal courage and strength were no longer of any avail. The bravery of king John and his knights, it was confessed, could scarcely be surpassed. But the king was compelled to yield himself a prisoner, and was received with extreme courtesy into the scarlet tent of the prince of Wales. The prince begged him not to make a poor meal because the day had gone against him, since to him, by the consent of all who had seen him, the prize of prowess beyond all question belonged.

Amount of Ran-
som demanded
for the French
King.

The Black Prince was resolved that the French king should in any case be a valuable prize. By the usage still prevalent, prisoners taken in war became the absolute property of their captors; but the sovereigns had learnt that the practice might be turned to their own profit. It was an easy matter to get the value of the prisoner assessed by a council of nobles. The sum then fixed was paid to the captor, and the king was thus enabled to insist on terms of ransom vastly in excess of the price for which he had bought the prisoner. For the French king 2000 marks had been granted to the knight who took him, and 100,000 florins had been spent in winning the assent of the

Gascons to his deportation to England. As the price of his freedom, Edward III. demanded three million crowns of gold.

Much praise has been bestowed on the modesty and simplicity of the Black Prince, who rode into London on a little black hackney by the side of the French king, who was mounted on a white war-horse magnificently caparisoned. So far as we may judge, he might not less easily be charged with a mock humility which covered an overweening notion of his own imposing grandeur.

Return of the
Black Prince
to London.

To his father it seemed that the great object at which he had been aiming was in his grasp. While the French king was moved from one castle to another in England, Edward advanced to Rheims, intending to have himself crowned king of France in the crowning-place of the French sovereigns. But his blockade, 1360, was a failure, which was followed by terrible ravages committed on the English coast by a French fleet. By way of retaliation Edward appeared before the gates of Paris itself; but failure of food and the severity of the weather drove him away; and a fearful storm in the neighbourhood of Chartres drew from him a cry that he would accept any terms of peace which might be compatible with his honour.

Sequel of the
French War.

The war accordingly was brought to an end by the "great peace" of Bretigni, by which Edward, renouncing all claims to the French throne, retained nothing on the Continent except Poitou, Guienne, and the county of Ponthieu, the inheritance of his mother, Isabella. The storm near Chartres, we are told, had brought home to him the wickedness of his ambition; there is no evidence that he had been affected by the far greater horrors which had desolated France since the battle of Poitiers.

Peace of Bre-
tigni. 1360.

Misery of the
French King-
dom.

That country had in truth been brought to the very abyss of misery. To furnish money for the ransom of their lords, whose oppression they hated, the peasantry had been brought to a state of nakedness and starvation. "Companies" of disbanded mercenaries roamed through the land, robbing and murdering everywhere; and when the States-General, under the leadership of Stephen Marcel, insisted on large measures of reform in the interests of the people, they were anticipated by a sudden outburst of popular fury, which for the moment left their moderate counsels in the shade. The peasants had been goaded into ungovernable madness. They had provided nothing, they had planned nothing. But lack of counsel and of purpose was supplied by an unreasoning sympathy, which ran like an electric shock through all.

Suppression of
the Jacquerie.

Multitudes, acting on mere impulse, swarmed round the castles, stormed them, and put to the sword the nobles who had mocked their miseries, while the "Companies" were cutting them down. For a little while their outcry, "Death to the gentlemen!" struck terror into the hearts of their oppressors; but training, discipline, and efficient weapons soon proved too strong for them. The peasants, cowed by a fury more savage than their own, sank back into a state more abject and hopeless than that against which they had risen in despair; and their frantic outburst, commonly known as the Jacquerie, seemed to pass away without leaving any marked effect behind it. The contrast thus presented to us between the history of the French and that of the English people is astonishing indeed.

Death of the
French King
in England.
1364.

It was to a country thus desolated and impoverished that the French king John returned, to fulfil the conditions of the peace. These conditions were not

carried out to the letter, and this fact led to a renewal of the struggle many years later, between Henry V. of England and Charles V. of France. For the present king John found his power weakened and his authority defied in every direction; and when his son, the Duke of Anjou, who with others had remained a hostage in England, broke his parole and refused to fulfil his promise of returning at the end of a specified time, John insisted on going back to England himself. He went back in spite of all dissuasions, and was received with the royal welcome which his integrity deserved; but he went back only to die. His body was carried to France, and laid among those of his predecessors in the church of the Abbey of St. Denis (1364).

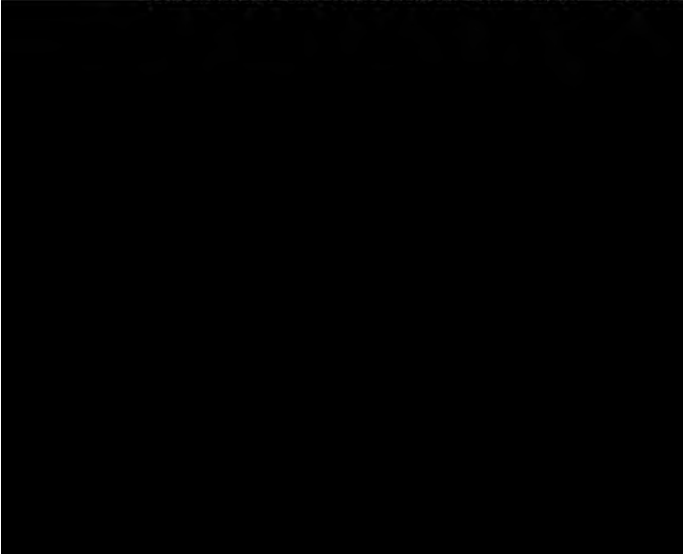
The brilliant portion of the Black Prince's career had now come to an end. Two years after the peace of Bretigni he had married his cousin, the Fair Maid of Kent, who in 1366 became the mother of his son, the future Richard II. He was now to become the ally of a man whose infamy could not fail to affect the fair fame of any one who entered into friendly relations with him. Pedro the Cruel, king of Castile, had made himself so hated by his murders and iniquities, that a revolution almost without bloodshed drove him from his throne. At Bordeaux Pedro besought the aid of the prince of Wales, and the mere fact of his dethronement was taken as a sufficient reason for maintaining his cause.

Placing full reliance on Pedro's word, the prince made himself personally responsible for the costs of the war. Fighting for this horrible tyrant, he won in the campaign of 1367 the battle of Navarete. John of Ghent (Gaunt), now Duke of Lancaster, fought on his side with the English reinforcements, while the well-

known captain, Bertrand du Guesclin, appeared among the leaders, under Henry of Transtamare, who had been placed on the throne of his half-brother, Pedro the Cruel. The fight was fiercely contested, and the number of the English was fearfully thinned. Infante Pedro broke faith and disappeared. The prince was seized with sickness, and he retreated through the pass of Roncesvalles, with his health and his strength broken, and burdened with a load of debt.

Renewal of the
French War.
1369.

The great enterprise of Edward III., although it had for many years shed an artificial splendour over his reign, and brought an artificial prosperity to his subjects, had led to complications ominous of future misery and disaster. The "renunciation" agreed upon by the treaty of Bretigni was never formally carried out, and at last, in 1369, the French king declared all the English possessions in France annexed to the French crown. The war was renewed. Bertrand du Guesclin led one army against Bordeaux. To another



been, or were, subject to the English kings, had come to feel that they were under a foreign dominion, which was out of place within the geographical limits of the France of their day. This change of feeling had clean dispelled the old pride which had led the men of Aquitaine to glory in their independence of the prince who ruled at Paris. It had also rendered the ultimate success of the English kings hopeless; but the English parliament was nevertheless resolved to carry on the struggle.

The war thus renewed redounded little to the glory or credit of those who were engaged in it. The invasion of France by the Duke of Lancaster in 1373, a miserable and disastrous failure, was followed by a truce, which king Edward was glad to accept. Three years later (1376) the Black Prince died, and the parliament turned to his young son, Richard, as the future sovereign of England.

Death of the
Black Prince.
1376.

The popularity of the king and his administration waned with his falling fortunes as a general. His subjects began to chafe under demands for money, and to hate the Duke of Lancaster, who had virtually taken the reins of government into his hands, and was suspected of aiming at the crown. Edward himself had fallen under the influence, or rather the dominion, of Alice Perrers, a lady of the bedchamber to his queen Philippa, who died in 1369. Efforts were made to remove her from the court; but the parliament, known as the Good Parliament, contented itself with passing an ordinance forbidding her to tamper with the administration of justice. The few remaining months of the king's life were spent at Eltham, under the care of Alice Perrers. He died June 21, 1377. He was sixty-four years of age, and he had been king for half a century.

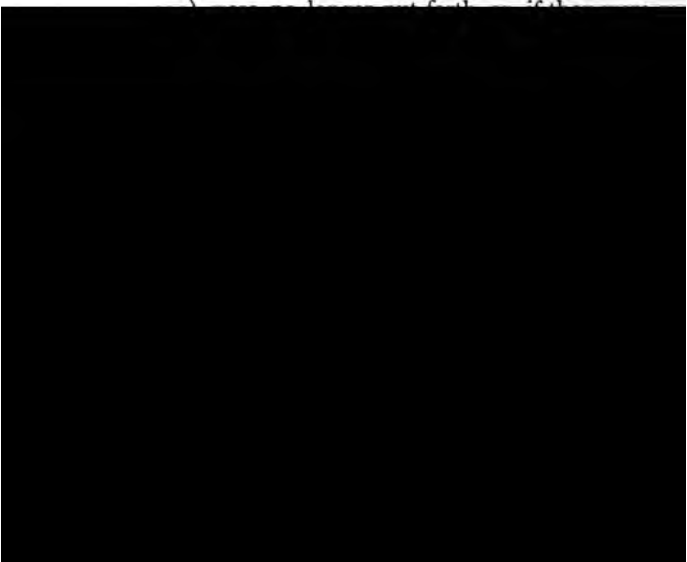
Death of Ed-
ward III. 1377.

**Character of his
Reign.**

The story of his reign has perhaps furnished sufficient picture of his character. Throughout life he seemed a greater man than he really was. He was himself probably unaware that, in his plans for securing to himself the crowns of Scotland and France, he was attempting a task altogether beyond his power. His schemes of conquest plunged him deeply into debt; but if his indebtedness imposed heavy burdens on his people also, it enabled them to insist on removal of a crowd of grievances, in return for supplies which they granted to him.

**Position of the
Clergy.**

Among these grievances were, as we have seen, abuses of the system of purveyance (p. 260), the looseness of the law of treason (p. 259), and the appointment of foreigners to ecclesiastical benefices in England (p. 260). In matters relating to the Church a great change had been almost silently brought about. The claims advanced by Thomas of London (pp. 1



unsparing attacks on the Mendicant Orders, which, founded with the sincerest intentions of reawakening spiritual life in an age of terrible moral and religious degradation, had gradually yielded to the temptations furnished by great power and great wealth. The begging friars were all but supreme in the universities. Wyclif struck at the very root of their constitution. He denied that Christ was a mendicant, and he asserted that for a large number of the friars mendicancy was mere lying pretence. They had stately houses, and rode on splendid horses, while their profession of poverty was reduced to the parading of some empty symbol in the form of a cowl or a hempen girdle. The other members of these orders he denounced as able-bodied beggars, who had become an unbearable nuisance.

From his onslaught on the mendicants, Wyclif ^W passed into a conflict with the Pope. He denied the papal claim to a tribute of English money; and here he had on his side the king and his brother, John of Ghent (or Gaunt), Duke of Lancaster, who remained his champion in the more directly theological controversies of his later career, and who is also known as the patron and friend of the poet Chaucer.

Wyclif further inveighed against the practice of ^W bestowing high secular offices on ecclesiastics. ^K He complained that these were bestowed on kitchen clerks, wise in building castles or in worldly business; and there is no doubt that he was here referring to stately and magnificent prelates like William of Wykeham, the founder of Winchester College and of New College at Oxford. Wykeham was impeached and deposed from the Chancellorship. Wyclif, for his services in the controversies with the Pope, received the prebend of Aust, in Worcester, and the rectory of Lutterworth

(1374), which he held till his death (1384). Both Wykeham and Wyclif had at heart the promotion of sound learning; but the one sought to uphold and magnify, the other to cramp and put down the hierarchy.

**Proceedings
against Wy-
clif.**

In the last year of king Edward's life, Wyclif was summoned to answer for heresy before the bishop of London. He appeared in St. Paul's, accompanied by the Duke of Lancaster and the Earl Marshal, who demanded a seat for Wyclif. The request led to a dispute between the marshal and the bishop. The dispute grew into a tumult. The crowd attacked the duke's magnificent palace of the Savoy, and all but succeeded in setting it on fire. The proceedings against Wyclif were dropped.

**Wyclif before
the Archbishop
of Canterbury.**

The rest of Wyclif's history belongs to the reign of Richard II.; but a better idea of his career as a whole may be obtained by giving the sequel here. When Wyclif next appeared, it was in obedience to a summons of the archbishop, Simon Sudbury, who acted on orders from the Pope. He was supported now, not by the Duke of Lancaster, but by the citizens of London, who found their way into the chapel at Lambeth. The proceedings were arrested by an order of the Princess of Wales, who was now at the head of the government.

**Wyclif's Trans-
lation of the
Old and New
Testaments.**

From this time Wyclif appears as the head of a body of preachers, who went about through the country to spread the doctrines and convictions of their teacher. He had now taken in hand the translation of the Old and New Testaments into English; and it is certain that this translation, or portions of it, must have been widely scattered, if there be any truth in the assertion of one of his adversaries, that lay men and women, if they could only read, would become

better acquainted with the Scriptures than even the most intelligent of the clergy.

This task of translation led Wyclif on to question many of the doctrines of the Church, as they were then promulgated. He was strengthened in his resolution by the scandalous exactions of papal legates, one of whom is said to have carried off in his bags more than a year's taxes of the realm.

Wyclif and the
Papal Legates

The insurrection of Walter the Tiler and the men of Kent furnished Wyclif's opponents with plausible grounds for attributing to him a general agreement with the opinions propounded by their chaplain, John Ball. The bishop of London, before whom Wyclif had already appeared, was now archbishop of Canterbury. A synod summoned by him condemned Wyclif for many heresies, among these being his denial of Transubstantiation, and his assertion that no sacraments could be duly administered by wicked priests, that a lord is no lord, and a prelate no prelate, while he is in mortal sin. It was obvious that these opinions were applicable to civil magistrates quite as much as to the clergy; and it was not, therefore, by the clergy only that the task of refuting them was regarded as an imperious duty.

Condemnation
of Wyclif.

Wyclif's increasing boldness brought him into greater hazards, but he faced them without fear. His condemnation by Convocation moved him for a moment; but, collecting himself, he appealed, not to the spiritual, but to the temporal power, not to the Pope, but to the king; and, having appealed, he departed to his rectory at Lutterworth. There was no one to molest him. As yet no statutes had been passed in England for the burning of heretics, and his enemies were afraid to ask for his imprisonment.

Wyclif at Lut-
terworth

The Church, indeed, seemed to be playing into his

The Struggle
the Anti-

hands. Two men were claiming to be the Pope. The pontiff of Rome, urging on a crusade against the pontiff of Avignon, promised to his supporters the same indulgences which had been granted to Crusaders in the Holy Land. Spencer, bishop of Norwich, placed himself at the head of the army thus raised. His campaign in Flanders was marked by inhumanity unheard of, even in those cruel times, and it ended in hopeless and ignominious failure. A more significant commentary on his teaching could not possibly have been desired by Wyclif himself.

**Wyclif and the
Lollards.**

But the work of the great reformer was well-nigh done. Two years after his condemnation by the Convocation at Oxford, Wyclif was struck with paralysis, and died on the last day of the year 1384. He had attacked many doctrines; he had denounced many abuses, but the incompleteness of his work is shown by the slender consequences which followed it. He left behind him a company of disciples, known as Lollards, and these gradually disappeared under the persecutions.

on John of Ghent (Gaunt). The fact that Richard, a child of eleven years old, was chosen because he was the son of the prince of Wales, shows the measure of growth attained by the more modern ideas of inheritance. The general dislike of John of Ghent, the Duke of Lancaster, had probably much to do with this resolution. Richard II. was crowned within a month; and, as no arrangements had been made for a regency, he became invested with the full powers of the sovereign. This fact turned out in the sequel to be a fatal misfortune.

John of Ghent had been made Duke of Lancaster because he had married the daughter of the nobleman who had been created Duke of Lancaster, a title unknown in this country before the reign of Edward III. The death of his brother Lionel, who had been made Duke of Clarence, left him practically the first man in the kingdom; but his abilities were by no means equal to his position. As a statesman, he showed little power; as a general, he seldom achieved success. Within a few months after Richard's coronation he was compelled to return to England, after an ignominious failure before the walls of St. Malo.

Return of John
of Ghent
(Gaunt) to
England.

He came back to a country where causes of disturbance were at work which in France had led to the horrors of the Jacquerie (p. 266). The results of the plague known as the Black Death had, as we have seen, made for the time a vast change in the condition of the peasantry (p. 258). They were able to demand, and to insist on receiving, higher wages, and they went on to find fault with the system generally under which they were made to live. In the old Teutonic language, the bondman was the free cultivator of the soil, and as such he is the *husband* of every family.

The Peasantry
and Bondage.

But the word had been made to bear the meaning slavery ; and therefore for the peasants bondage was now a thing to be got rid of. They were kept in that state of serfdom by the laws and the lawyers ; and both laws and lawyers were regarded by them with impartial hatred.

The Peasants,
the Clergy,
and the Gen-
try.

These feelings were stirred up among them and kept alive by some few of the clergy, who told them that things would never be right until there should be neither gentlemen nor villeins (p. 103), and all should be absolutely equal. The rich and the poor, the mighty and the weak, were all children of Adam and Eve ; and when Adam was delving and Eve spinning, where was the gentleman to be found ? The present state of things, they said, was no longer to be borne ; they would not be treated like brute beasts. If they must do the fair day's work, it must be for a fair day's wage. The rule was perfectly just, but the minds of the employers went back to the wages of the time preceding the Black Death ; and the ideas of the peasants were fixed on the comparatively more favourable conditions which had followed it.

them that he greeted them well, and gave them to understand that he had rung their bell. "Now right and might," he said, "will and skill. God speed the work. Stand manly together in truth; and if the end be well all is well."

In spite of the counsels of the archbishop of Canterbury, who advised him to have nothing to do with shoeless scoundrels, the king went to meet them in his barge, and asked the insurgents what they wanted. "Come on shore and talk with us," was the answer; "we can then tell you what we must have." "Your clothes are not fit for the king's presence," was the rejoinder, and the boat shot back to the Tower. "To London, to London!" shouted the insurgents. Vain attempts were made to keep them out of the city. The multitudes burst through the gates, and set on fire the Savoy Palace, the splendid abode of the Duke of Lancaster. The archbishop paid with his life the penalty for the epithets which he had bestowed on the peasants. He was beheaded on Tower Hill.

**Murder of the
Archbishop of
Canterbury.**

On the next day the strange drama was enacted, in which the boy king, if we are to believe the story, showed himself a proficient in the art of treachery. Meeting the insurgents at Mile End, he assured them that, if they would disperse, they should have charters under the Great Seal, granting all their desires, together with a pardon for all who had taken part in the outbreak. The letters of pardon were duly written, and the peasants departed with them. Wat the Tiler and John Balle put their trust in the king's word; and when the king met at Smithfield those who had not already returned home, the former stated again with the utmost frankness the requirements without which they would not be satisfied. The tiler had advanced

**Richard and
the Insurgents
at Mile End
and Smithfield.**

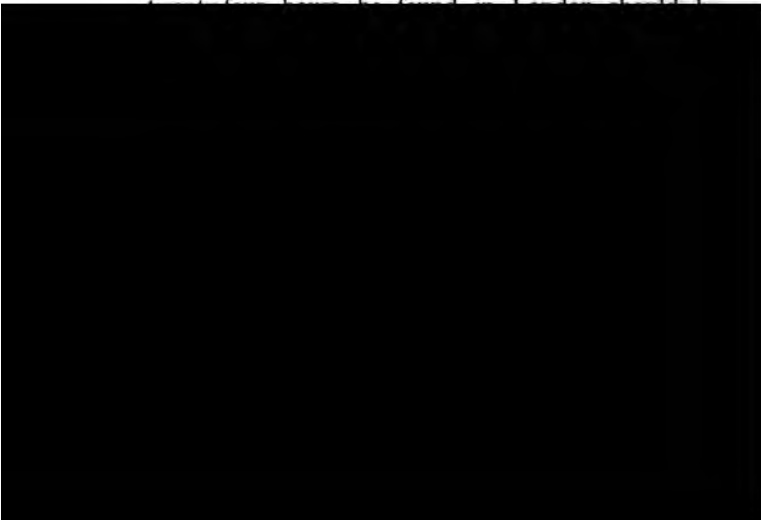
alone ; and it is beyond all belief that he should have done so had he designed to do any harm to the king. But Walworth, the Lord Mayor of London, affecting to fear such an attack, struck him down, and Wat Tiler was immediately murdered.

The King's Promises at Smithfield.

“They have killed our leader! Let us kill them all!” was the cry of the multitude. In the midst of the uproar Richard advanced, and told them, it is said, that he was their leader, and that if they would but follow him they should have all that they wanted. They took him at his word, and marched on in great disorder. At the tidings that the king was in the hands of the rebels, a large force of nobles and knights with their retainers marched out to rescue him. As they approached, the king put spurs to his horse and took refuge in their ranks.

Breach of Faith with the Peasants.

The play, it would seem, was ended. All thought of keeping faith with the peasants was at an end. The charters granted to them were all revoked, and proclamation was made that all who should after



influence of John of Ghent, he raised his two other uncles to the rank of dukes, making the one Duke of York, the other Duke of Gloucester. At the same time he showered honours on some men who were supposed to be his favourites, the most prominent of whom were Michael de la Pole, the son of a merchant at Hull, who had lent to Edward III. vast sums of money which had never been repaid, and Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, whom he created first Marquis of Dublin, and then Duke of Ireland. De la Pole was made Earl of Suffolk ; but his dignity brought him little profit. He was impeached, condemned, and imprisoned ; and the same parliament which brought this about issued a commission of regency, which virtually put the royal authority in abeyance.

This commission was declared invalid not long afterwards by a council held at Nottingham ; but the declaration brought little freedom to the king. Nor was his position greatly improved by the Wonderful, or, as it has also been termed, the Merciless Parliament, which set its face against the confederate lords, who had seriously discussed the question of his deposition (1388).

**The Wonderful
Parliament.
1388.**

In the following year, the king, turning suddenly to his uncle the Duke of Gloucester, at a great council, asked him to tell him his age. The answer was that he was in his twenty-second year. "Then I must be old enough," he said, "to manage my own concerns. I thank you, my lords, for all trouble taken on my behalf ; but I shall no longer need your services." The Great Seal was given to William of Wykeham, and the change, brought about without violence, introduced a time of general quiet.

**William of
Wykeham
Chancellor.
1389.**


But Richard could not rest long without trying to

**Death of the
Duke of Gloucester.**

bring his enemies to punishment, and these in turn engaged in fresh plots for his overthrow. When at length an order was sent to the governor of Calais to bring the Duke of Gloucester to be tried by peers, the answer returned was that the duke had died in the prison, and a strong, perhaps not an unreasonable suspicion, was aroused that he had been put to death by the king's order. Such a suspicion could not fail to be more hurtful to him than any other which he might have incurred by the condemnation and execution of his uncle; but he seems to have been resolved at all hazards to break up the confederacy which ten years before had well-nigh hurled him from his throne.

Parliament of
Shrewsbury.
1398.

For a time his success appeared complete. The parliament of Shrewsbury (1398) annulled all proceedings of the Wonderful Parliament, denounced the penalties of treason on all who should venture to reverse its own decrees. Having taken this precaution, the parliament handed over all its powers to a committee of twelve lords and



threw down his warder and stopped the fight. Taking counsel with the committee, he ordered the banishment of the Duke of Hereford for ten years, and of the Duke of Norfolk for life. The king was making another blunder, whatever may be said for the justice of punishing a man whom he professed to regard as innocent, because he wished to punish another who was guilty.

Early in 1399 old John of Gaunt died. His title of Duke of Lancaster now belonged to his son, the banished Duke of Hereford ; but, breaking the promise according to which Hereford might take possession by deputy of any inheritance which might come to him during his absence, the king, enticed by the wealth of the duchy, took possession of his uncle's property as a forfeiture to the crown.

Death of John
of Gaunt. 1399.

Having so done, Richard sailed for Ireland. A few days later, Henry of Lancaster, as we may now term him, landed at Ravenspur, a Yorkshire port on the Humber, now washed away by the sea. His object, he said, was simply to recover the title and estates which belonged to him of right. The Duke of York attempted at first to oppose him ; but, finding the task beyond his powers, he pacified his conscience by asking the purpose of his coming, and, receiving the same guarded answer, thought it prudent to take his side, although Lancaster declared that he could not get what he wanted so long as the king's evil counsellors remained with him.

Landing of
Henry of Lan-
caster at
Ravenspur

Richard was still in Ireland when he received these tidings. He had with him the son of Henry of Lancaster, the future Henry V., the victor of Agincourt, whom with his own hands he had lately made a knight. "See what your father has done," he said to the young prince. "He has invaded my kingdom

Richard II. in
Ireland.

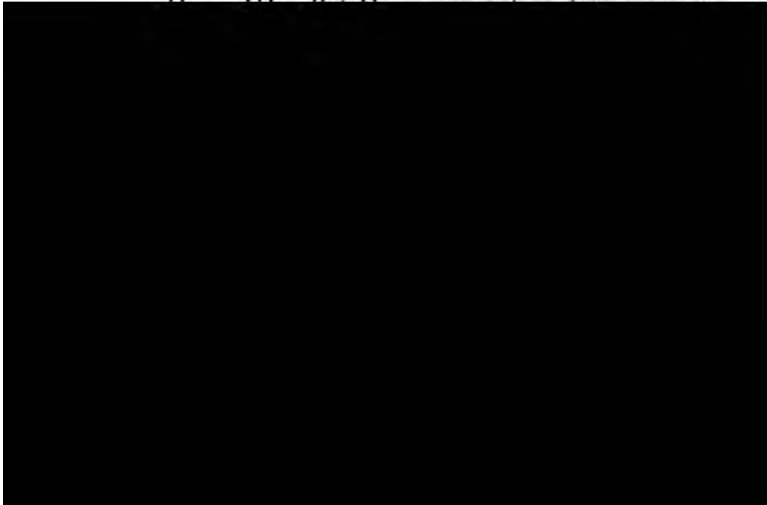
as an enemy, slaying and imprisoning without pity. I grieve for you, for this mischance may lose you your inheritance." He seems to have had at the moment no special fear that it would cost himself both his crown and his life.

**Richard II. in
Flint Castle.**

On landing in Wales, Richard became more aware of the extent of his danger, and he learnt more about the intentions of Lancaster, before the duke appeared before him in full armour at Flint Castle. "I have come before you sent for me," he said. "Your people complain that you have ruled them very harshly for twenty years or more. If it please God, I will help you to rule them better."

**Abdication of
Richard II.
Transference
of the Crown
to Henry of
Lancaster.**

From Flint Richard was taken to Chester, and from Chester to the Tower of London. Here he was induced to sign an act of abdication, in which he was made to pronounce himself unfit for reigning. No sooner had the document been read in parliament, than the Duke of Lancaster stepped forward and claimed the crown by right of his descent from



CHAPTER LXI.

THE REIGN OF HENRY IV.

THE reign of Richard II. was thus brought abruptly to a close. In its later portion it had been simply an experiment in the path of despotism, carried out by means of parliaments which annulled the acts of previous councils, and laid their ban on those who might dare to reverse their own. The same process was necessarily repeated on the accession or election of Henry IV. The decrees of the Parliament of Shrewsbury (p. 280) were swept away, and those of the Wonderful or Merciless Parliament were confirmed (p. 279).

Character of the
Reign of Richard II.

But Richard still lived ; and opposition to the new king was sure to take the form of a conspiracy for the restoration of the old one. The conspiracy was betrayed and suppressed ; but it seems to have removed the reluctance which Henry had professed to feel for taking away his nephew's life. Within a few weeks Richard died in his prison at Pontefract. There was no evidence that the king had ordered his death. Some said that he had been murdered ; others that he had starved himself to death. The starvation may have been involuntary. (1400.)

Death of Richard II. at
Pontefract.
1400.


The death of Richard was followed by an invasion of Scotland which, on the whole, did more good than harm to Henry IV. In the same year a stranger was seen in the streets of London, of whose position Englishmen generally had probably only a confused notion. This was Manuel Paleologus, the Roman emperor of the East, who had come to seek for aid against the Turks. The history of England was thus

Visit of the
Roman Emperor of the
East to London.

for a moment linked with the fortunes of the distant empire which, two years later, all but fell under the sword of Bajazet the Thunderbolt, when the latter was taken prisoner on the field of Angora by a conqueror or marauder still more terrible, Timour, or Tamerlane. Timour had at least arrested the progress of the Turk, and this was held to be so great a service to Christendom, that Henry IV. wrote himself to wish him joy on his victory.

Rebellion of
Owen Glendower,
aided
by Hotspur.

Richard was dead ; but Henry found that his own path was none the smoother for the riddance. Rumours were spread that Richard was alive in Scotland. The Welsh rose in rebellion under Owen Glendower, a descendant of Llewellyn (p. 224). Glendower was joined in his revolt by Henry Percy, commonly known as Hotspur, who, with his father, the Earl of Northumberland, had just defeated the Scottish army in the battle of Homildon Hill (Sept. 14, 1402). Hotspur's enterprise came to an end on the field of Shrewsbury (July 21, 1403), where



broke the heart of Robert III. ; and the young king (James I.) of the Scots, a prisoner in the Tower of London, solaced himself as best he could by writing poems, which, to say the least, are of no inconsiderable merit.

But clouds were gathering which were ominous of new dangers or of fresh miseries for the State. Wyclif had died peaceably at Lutterworth, 1384 ; but his enemies would probably have ordained it otherwise for him if they could. There was, however, no statute at that time for the slaying of heretics. This want was now supplied, and parliament enacted that the convicted heretic, on being handed over to the secular arm, should be burnt. This measure was dealt out to a priest named William Sawtrey, and the holocausts, once begun, were soon and easily repeated.

Statute de heretico comburendo (for the burning of heretics).

But while the authority of the Church was thus professedly upheld on the one side, the endowments of the Church were unsparingly attacked on the other. A serious effort to deprive it of temporalities was made, on the ground that the revenue of the bishops, abbots, and priors would maintain an army of knights and esquires for the defence of the kingdom.

Attacks on Church Endowments.

Popular attention was, however, soon to be diverted in another direction. Constant anxiety had done its work on the health of the king. Epileptic fits came on in quick succession. The last fit seized him in Westminster, and he died (1413) in the Jerusalem Chamber ; thus fulfilling, it was said, a prophecy that he was to die in Jerusalem. Henry had certainly often wished to die in the Holy Land ; and the incident may have recalled his wish to the minds of those who were gathered round him at the last.

Death of Henry IV. 1413.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE REIGN OF HENRY V.

Accession of
Henry V. 1413.

THE young Henry, whom we have seen with his cousin Richard II. in Ireland (page 281), was now king. He was but twenty-six years old; but he made up his mind as to the course which in prudence he ought to take in order to make good his title to the throne. He had told his father, it is said, that he should follow his example by trusting to his sword to supply all that might be defective in it.

Anecdotes of
his Earlier
Years.

Strange stories were believed, or related, of his earlier years. His bravery none could question; discretion might well have been greater than it seemed to have been. Some said that he waylaid his messengers and receivers, and enjoyed their confusion when they learnt who it was that had robbed them of their money gathered for the prince's use. A better known tale is that in which Henry, charging the Chief Justice

differ from them. Their declarations, affixed to the doors of churches in London, announced that a hundred thousand men were ready to take up arms for their cause.

By Henry's orders, Cobham was committed to the Tower, 1413; but, on being brought before the archbishop of Canterbury, he insisted that he believed all that the Church had determined, although he denied that the Pope, bishops, and cardinals had anything to do with determining these points. On being further questioned, he declared that the Pope, the clergy, and the friars were simply the head, body, and tail of Antichrist. Such opinions brought him under the statutes passed in the last reign for the burning of heretics. But Cobham escaped from prison, and a fresh conspiracy broke out, which the king summarily suppressed, 1414. For the present Cobham got off; but three years later rumour charged him with having brought about what was called the Foul Raid of the Scotch under the Duke of Albany. After a troublesome search, he was taken in Wales, brought to London, tried and condemned by his peers on the old indictment, and executed as a heretic (1417).

**Trial of Lord
Cobham. 1413.**

For such disputes as these Henry was not sorry to substitute interests of another sort. The French king asked his aid towards putting down rebellion and faction in his realm. Henry held the scales evenly balanced until he saw that the time was come for reasserting the old claim of Edward III. (p. 252), and then he insisted on receiving all that had been ceded to England by the treaty of Bretigni (p. 265), together with a large number of provinces not named in that document. The claim was really ridiculous. The contention of Edward III. was intelligible; but neither Henry V. nor his father could maintain that

**Renewal of the
Quarrel with
the French
King.**

they had come to the throne on any theory of lineal succession. But a war with France would, if successful, be popular; and Henry had no hesitation in running the risk.

Departure of
Henry for
France. 1415.

He left England on his errand of conquest late in the summer of 1415. Five weeks were spent in reducing Harfleur, at the mouth of the Seine; and then, seeing that he could do little before the winter set in, he resolved to make his way by land to Calais. He had started with 30,000 men; his force was reduced, some have said, to not much more than 6000. Encountering many dangers and difficulties, the English succeeded in crossing the Somme, about fifty miles beyond Amiens, and found the French army at the distance of forty-five miles from Calais, near the village of Agincourt. Everything seemed to portend an overwhelming success for the latter. Their numbers were five or six times greater than those of the enemy, who were also sick and hungry, while they themselves lacked for nothing. Full of confidence, they spent the eve of battle in dining and merrymaking, while the English, we are told, passed it in prayer, a story which recalls the tale of Norman devotion and English feasting before the fight of Senlac (page 150). Here, as at Creci, the issue of the day was determined by the archers, whose arrows rendered the horses of the cavalry unmanageable, and thus threw the whole French army into confusion.

Battle of Agin-
court. 1415.

The terrible slaughter was increased by an order which Henry issued for the killing of all the prisoners, when he heard that some of the enemy, having got to his rear, were attacking the baggage. Ten thousand of the French, it is said, fell, the English loss being given by some as only 100, while even their enemies described it as not more than 1600 at the most. A

victory so decisive could not fail to kindle the enthusiasm of the English people. All grievances were forgotten. Rushing into the sea, the men of Dover carried the king in their arms from the ship to the shore, from which his march to London was one long triumphal procession.

Henry's success brought him powerful friends. Sigismund, the emperor elect of the Romans, visited him in England, entered into a league with him against France, and accompanied him to Calais, where they were joined by John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy. The condition of France, from feud, faction, and civil war, was as miserable as an invader could well desire. The English were soon masters of the most of Normandy; but although Rouen held out with an obstinacy which reduced the inhabitants to the direst straits, it was compelled to capitulate early in 1419; and Henry turned his sword to other conquests.

**Fall of Rouen.
1419.**

Efforts to bring about a peace were made, and failed. France was fatally hampered by its intestine divisions; and at length all the demands made by the English king were accepted. He was to marry the princess Catherine, and to succeed her father on his death; and all who held offices under the French crown were to swear allegiance to him as their future sovereign.

**Treaty with the
French King.
1420.**

Such were the provisions of the treaty of Troyes, May 21, 1420. His marriage took place a few days later, and then Henry betook himself at once to the completion of his work of conquest. His career was one of unbroken success, and he returned to England the idol of his people. The defeat of his brother the Duke of Clarence by a French army recalled him to a third invasion of France, 1421, in which he achieved

**Third Invasion
of France. 1421.**

results not less splendid than those of his earlier campaigns. While he besieged Meaux on the Marne, the tidings were brought to him that the queen had borne him a son, the child who, yet in his infancy, was to succeed him as Henry VI.

Death of Henry
V. Aug. 13,
1422.

The reduction of Meaux was his last exploit. He had sent forward his army under his brother the Duke of Bedford, intending soon to join it himself. An attack of dysentery prevented him from doing so, and when he reached Vincennes, near Paris, he was manifestly dying. He had just time before he died to name the Duke of Bedford to the regency of France, and his other brother, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, to that of England; to appoint his two uncles, Henry and Thomas Beaufort (the former bishop of Winchester, the latter Duke of Exeter), guardians of his infant child; and to order that the Duke of Orleans and the other prisoners taken at Agincourt should on no account be set free until his son should be of age. (Aug. 13, 1422.)

Henry V. as a The impression left on his subjects by his short



prise as that to which he had committed the English nation.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE REIGN OF HENRY VI.

IN the general excitement of popular feeling the infant Henry VI. seemed to carry with him an indisputable title to the English crown. The people took pride in the thought that their sovereign was heir to the French crown also ; and when, not three months later, the French king died, and Henry became, by the treaty of Troyes, actually king of France as well as England, their exultation threatened to burst all bounds.

Henry VI., King
of England
and of France
1422.

For some time the prospect seemed in a high degree encouraging. To win a powerful friend, the Duke of Bedford married the sister of the Duke of Burgundy ; and, to detach Scotland from the French alliance, the captive king James I. (p. 285) was set free, after an imprisonment of eighteen years, on condition that he should give no aid to any enemies of the king of England (1424). But the work of conquest was not done. Charles VII. still asserted his rights to the throne of France, and it became necessary to wrest from him the whole country to the north of the Loire.

Prospects of the
English in
France.

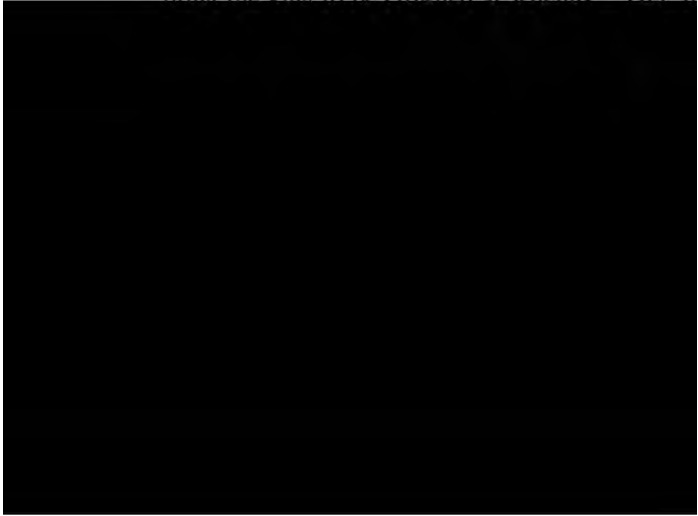
For this purpose the city of Orleans was closely invested, and its reduction seemed certain. Through the bravery and skill of Sir John Fastolf, who had won fame at Agincourt, and was now governor of Normandy, the besiegers received a convoy of provisions, which, consisting chiefly of salted fish, gave to the

Siege of Or-
leans. 1428

battle which he fought the name of the Battle of the Herrings. Attacked by a force vastly outnumbered his own, Fastolf used the herring waggons as a point of defence, and, having thrown the enemy into confusion, routed them finally with great slaughter. Fastolf is the Falstaff of Shakespeare's plays. We need scarcely say that the one resembles the other name only.

Joan of Arc.

The people of Orleans were now reduced to desperate straits. A French proposal to place Orleans in the hands of the Duke of Burgundy, was met by the Duke of Bedford with the summary answer that he was not a man to beat the bush in order that others might have the birds. But the course of events was to be turned in a way looked for by no one. Just about the time when Fastolf was bringing a convoy of food for the English, a young woman from Domremy, on the borders of Lorraine, informed the commanding officer of the district that she was divinely commissioned to raise the siege of Orleans, and to bring the king to be crowned at Rheims. Her name



source of her revelations, declared that her call clearly was from God; and, having received the king's sanction, she sent to the Duke of Bedford a formal summons to raise the siege of Orleans, and to accompany her on a crusade to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the Turks. At Blois, finding a force prepared to march to the relief of the city, she purged it of all bad characters, and made the men feel that they were engaged in a sacred work. She had no sooner reached Orleans, than the wind, which had kept some vessels from going up the river for a convoy, suddenly changed. Embarking on one of the vessels, she sailed up with the little fleet, brought the stores of food into the town, and changed completely the spirit and attitude of the besieged.

Thus far they had been chiefly passive. By her advice they attacked the forts built by the English, and took them in succession, until one only, the Tournelle, remained. In the attempt to scale the walls of this fort, Joan was wounded, and carried into a vineyard, while the French leader sounded the retreat. "Wait awhile," she cried out. "So soon as my standard touches the walls, you shall take the fort." Her words, it is said, were verified; and on the next day the English raised the siege and marched northwards. Charles VII. was crowned at Rheims; and with this fulfilment of her hopes she felt that her task was done.

Coronation of
Charles VII.
at Rheims.
1429.

It is not wonderful that with such a conviction the enthusiasm which she had thus far awakened should pass away. The war went on; and the French king underwent fresh defeats. Joan herself was taken prisoner at Compiègne, handed over to the Duke of Burgundy, and by him delivered to the English, who had always attributed her work to an evil inspiration,

Capture and
Trial of Joan
of Arc. 1430.

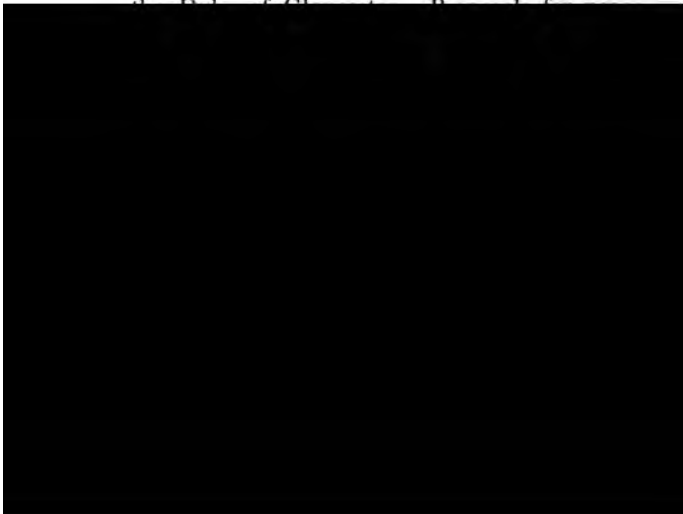
and proceeded to deal with her as a sorceress, from whom the flames were hungering (1430).

Execution of
Joan of Arc.
1431.

The issue was not doubtful; but, when sentence was given against her, she still insisted that she heard to her Lord, the King of heaven and earth; and, when fastened to the stake in the market-place of Rouen, she declared that her voices were of God, and that they had never deceived her (1431). One at least amongst her English executioners confessed his faith that their cause was lost, because they had burnt a saint.

Increasing Difficulties of the
English.

If the English cause was the cause of Henry V., it was certainly lost. The idea of retaining possession of all France for the child Henry VI. was for the Duke of Bedford so manifest an impossibility that he fell back on the plan of keeping Normandy only. But the waters were growing stormy on all sides. In spite of his having accepted a cardinal's hat, Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, contrived to retain and increase his influence at the expense



This measure gave great offence to the Duke of Gloucester, and to a large body of the people.

But the Duke of Gloucester was suddenly attacked through his wife, Eleanor Cobham, who, along with Roger Bolingbroke, a chaplain of the duke, was accused of sorcery and treason. The charge takes us into that strange and horrible region of imaginary or impossible crimes, in which so much of the real history of the English people has been enacted. Like the Obi women of the West Indies, Bolingbroke, it was said, had made an image of wood resembling the king, whose strength, it was supposed, would waste away as the image was slowly consumed. Bolingbroke suffered as a traitor; his alleged accomplice, Margaret Jourdain, commonly known as the Witch of Eye, was burnt in Smithfield. The Duchess of Gloucester, having been compelled to do penance in the streets of London, was imprisoned for life.

Trial of Eleanor Cobham, Duchess of Gloucester. 1441.

In the release of the Duke of Orleans, and in all other measures, the young king followed implicitly the counsels of the cardinal of Winchester and of William De la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, the son of that De la Pole who had been a councillor to Richard II. (p. 297). The latter urged the king to marry Margaret, the daughter of René, Duke of Anjou, and titular king of Naples and Jerusalem. This princess he was to receive without a dowry, while he was to yield to René the provinces of Maine and Anjou, so far as he had any power over them.

Marriage of the King with Margaret of Anjou. 1445.

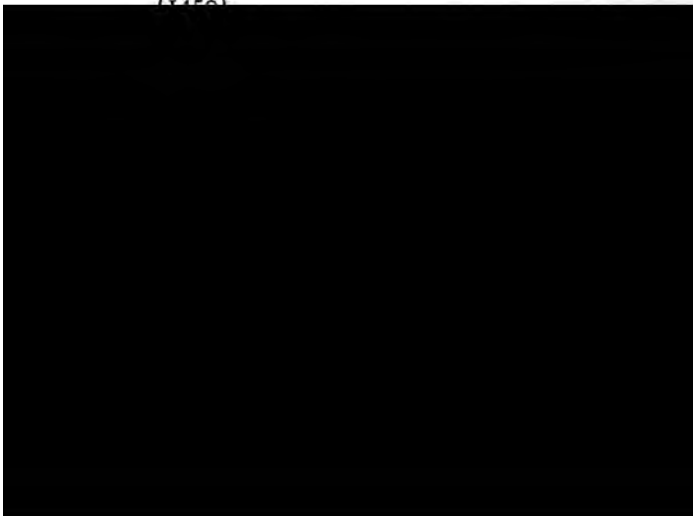
These concessions were strongly resented by the Duke of Gloucester, who was soon afterwards arrested. A few days later, he died (1447), and Suffolk was strongly suspected of having brought about his death. The death of Cardinal Beaufort followed almost immediately. Shakespeare has drawn a terrible

Death of the Duke of Gloucester and of Cardinal Beaufort. 1447.

picture of the agonies of despair which darkened closing hours ; but eye-witnesses of the scene gave a very different picture of the calmness with which he gave his final orders, and took part in the religious services for the dying.

Loss of English
Conquests in
France.

Little now remained of the splendid conquests of Henry V. Before the end of 1450, the whole of Normandy was completely wrested from the English, and the credit of the disasters which led to this result was largely given to the Duke of Suffolk, who was by a newly-coined word called a jackanape, a crime averring that he was "the ape with his clog who had tied Talbot our good dog," Talbot being Earl of Shrewsbury. Absurd charges were brought against him ; but Henry, refusing to pass a sentence, ordered him to leave England for five years. Thus following the example of Richard II. (p. 281), Henry gave offence to many, and satisfied none. Suffolk was seized on his voyage to Flanders, taken out of his ship, placed in a small boat, and beheaded (1450).



Suffolk was gone; and the Duke of York, son of the Earl of Cambridge,¹ a cousin of king Henry V., thought that the time was come for claiming a prominent share in the work of government. But his efforts were fruitless, until a series of fresh reverses still further reduced the English power in France. Normandy had been already lost. Guienne and Gascony, which had remained attached to the English crown since the marriage of Eleanor to Henry II. (p. 196), now became French possessions; and grave fears were felt even for Calais, the only town remaining to the English on the Continent (1451). So ended the hundred years' war, in the thorough frustration of the claims and plans which led to it, and in a vast aggrandisement of the French monarchy. An attempt made two years later to recover these provinces ended in hopeless failure.

To the Duke of York these calamities seemed to call for and to justify more active interference. Marching to London with an army of followers, he declared, as Henry IV. had declared on landing at Ravenspur, that he sought only the removal of the evil counsellors who had gained the ear of the king. His reception led him to dismiss his forces; but, having done so, he found himself in the power of his rival, the Duke of Somerset. The latter, however, was afraid to employ any extreme measures. Rumour said that 10,000 men were hastening to London under the command of Edward, Earl of March, son of the Duke of York, and afterwards Edward IV. To avert this danger, the Duke of Somerset contented himself with demanding that the Duke of York should make public profession of his loyalty. The duke did so, and was allowed to go free (1452).

¹ See Genealogy IV.

**The Civil Wars
of England.**

We now reach a miserable time of deadly plebeian feuds, and civil wars, which seem to impair or destroy all sense of honesty and duty, and to train men to endurance or to the liking of every kind of injustice, ferocity, and cruelty. In 1453, eight years after the marriage, queen Margaret gave birth to a son, named Edward; but the mind of the king was now absolutely upset that he could not be made to understand the tidings that he was a father. To provide for the carrying on of the government, the lords parliament appointed the Duke of York Protector of England; but his office came to an end with the recovery of the king (Christmas, 1453), and he was deprived also of the governorship of Calais.

**The Wars of the
Roses. Battle
of Eglar-
heath. 1455.**

Taking the law into his own hands, the Duke of York, with other lords, marched towards London from the north, fought and won a battle at St. Albans, the first fight in the Wars of the Roses, and then besought the king's forgiveness for having done so. His pardon was granted; but again the king fell ill, and again York was named Protector, with the proviso that he should not be released of the office except



these forces at Northampton, was defeated, and taken prisoner (1460).

Returning from Ireland, the Duke of York hurried to London, and there, taking his seat on the throne, he gave to the Chancellor a paper in which he claimed the crown, by virtue of his descent from Lionel, an elder brother of John of Ghent, through whom Henry IV. and his successors professed to draw their title. In making this claim, he was taking his stand on later theories of primogeniture and succession. King Henry was more in accordance with the old English practice when he said, "My father and my father's father were kings before me ; I have been king forty years from my cradle. You have all sworn fealty to me as your sovereign. How can my title be called into question ?" He would have been wholly in agreement with the old practice, had he urged that the choice of the nation barred all retrospective inquiries as to lineal descent.

Claim of the
Crown by the
Duke of York

But it is not likely that such arguments would carry much weight at such a time. The lords decided on the score of inheritance in favour of the Duke of York ; but an arrangement was made not unlike that which was entered into in the case of Stephen and Henry II. (p. 196). Henry was to remain king, and York was to succeed him ; but to this compact queen Margaret, who thought of her son, had no idea of assenting. The Duke of York was induced to attack her forces in Yorkshire, and was himself slain in the bloody battle of Wakefield (Dec. 30, 1460). It is hard to determine which side lies more open to the charge of wanton cruelty in these Wars of the Roses ; so called from the white rose worn as the badge of the Yorkists, and the red rose of the Lancastrians.

Battle of Wake
field. 1460.

**Battle of Mortimer's Cross.
Feb. 2, 1461.**

The Lancastrians' victory at Wakefield was followed a few weeks later by a defeat at Mortimer's Cross. Before the battle, the Earl of March, the future Edward IV., was cheered by the sight of three suns in the sky which merged into one; a phenomenon of no means unparalleled in this country or in others. Amongst the prisoners taken in the fight, and afterwards among the victims executed, was Owen Tudor, a Welsh chieftain,¹ who claimed descent from Cwallader (p. 43), and who had married the widow of Henry V. Edmund, the eldest of the two sons of this marriage, became the father of Henry VII.

Deposition of Henry VI. 1461.

This turn of fortune reversed the position of the combatants. The Yorkists underwent a severe defeat in the second battle of St. Albans (Feb. 1461). But although king Henry was now free, the Earl of March advanced to London, and was received with acclamations by the citizens. Following his father's example, the earl summoned a council and asserted his right to the crown.² The king admitted his title, and the people, when asked

The Earl of Warwick had been the chief instrument in making Edward king ; and he was yet to do other acts which would win for him the title of the Kingmaker. For the present he had to face the army of Henry and Margaret. The battle was fought near Towton, a few miles from York. The slaughter on both sides was vast ; but the adherents of the new king were the victors. Henry and Margaret fled towards Scotland ; Edward, returning to London, was crowned on the 28th of June. His brothers George and Richard, afterwards Richard III., were created Dukes of Clarence and of Gloucester ; and a council, calling itself the parliament of the nation, declared the three preceding sovereigns usurpers.

Escaping to France, Margaret made a treaty with the French king, Louis XI., by which she promised to surrender Calais as the price of his help. But the capture of a few strong castles in the north of England shed only a momentary gleam of light on her cause ; and by the end of the year she was again a fugitive, falling sometimes, it is said, among robbers, and escaping by an appeal to their loyalty. She succeeded in making her way to Flanders ; but the partisans of Henry were again defeated at Hexham (May 14, 1464), and from this time Henry lived in hiding for more than a year.

His part on the political stage was, however, not yet wholly ended ; and Edward's marriage became the cause of his temporary restoration. The widow of the Duke of Bedford, who had been regent for France in Henry's childhood (p. 290), had married Richard Woodville, Lord Rivers ; and her daughter Elizabeth (who was also a widow, her husband, Sir John Grey, having been killed in the second battle of St. Albans) now became the wife of Edward,

Battle of Hexham. 1464.

Marriage of Edward IV. to Elizabeth Woodville. 1464.

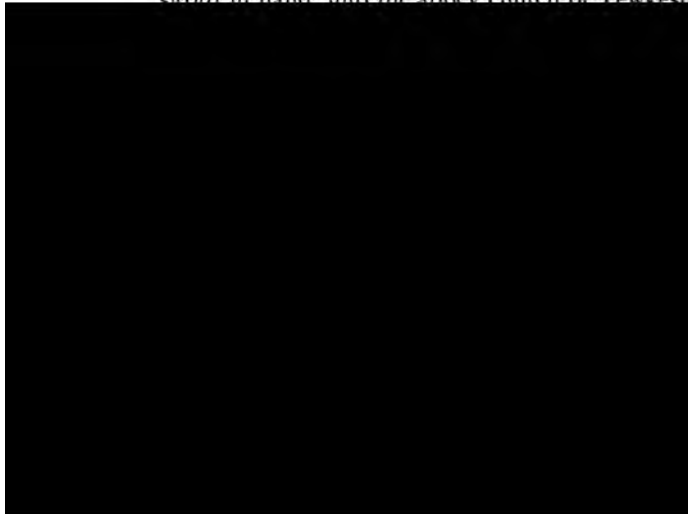
the chief use, of language was to deceive; and that can be said is that he stood by no means aloof in his age, as a proficient in the school of falsehood.

**Battle of Barnet.
Death of
Warwick. 1471.**

The opposing armies met at Barnet (April 1471); and here, after a terrible struggle, the Earl of Warwick was slain. The kingmaker left the field to the Duke of Gloucester, whom he had abased triumphant; and the overthrow of Margaret's forces at Tewkesbury, a few days later, finally crushed the hopes of the House of Lancaster. The prince of Wales either fell in the fight, or was murdered immediately after the battle; the Duke of York himself, it was said, giving him a blow with his gauntleted hand when he cried for mercy.

**Bad Faith of
Edward IV.**

Later writers spoke of the Duke of Gloucester as the future Richard III., as the murderer; but it is more likely that the evil name which he afterwards acquired, fastened on him the credit of acts which he had nothing to do. He was at this time a lad of only nineteen years of age. It is probably a true story, that Edward, seeking to force his way into the abbey church of Tewkesbury with his sword in hand, into the abbey church of Tewkesbury.



strong temptation for the English people; and Edward, holding out this bait before them, obtained, by dint of personal pleading, vast sums of money as donations under the title of benevolences. These contributions were supposed to be proofs of the devotion and loyalty of the giver. Really, they were taxes of the severest kind; but their full pressure was to be felt later on. For the time they enabled Edward, along with his other revenues, to invade France in 1475, with a splendid army.

But Louis XI. had no idea of fighting. Instead of handing over the French kingdom to Edward, as the English herald desired him to do, he expressed his conviction that the English king had not come so much on his own account as on that of his ally, the Duke of Burgundy, who could not do much to help him after all. So saying, he dismissed the herald with a handsome gift, assuring him of a vastly larger reward, if he would bring Edward over to his own side. The herald did his bidding so well, that a truce was made for seven years, with the stipulation that the French king should pay a yearly pension, which the English sovereign might, if he pleased, term a tribute.

These terms having been agreed to, Edward and Louis met on a bridge thrown across the Somme at Pequigny. After conversing awhile, Louis courteously spoke of the pleasure which he should feel in welcoming him to Paris. The words were not meant seriously, but Edward seemed inclined to treat them as so meant; and Louis, taking care that nothing should come of them, told the historian, Philip of Commynes, that English kings had been far too often in Paris already.

Edward returned to England, stronger, it might be

have been thought, than he had left it ; but strife & division had taken deep root in his own family. There was a quarrel between his two brothers, Clarence and Gloucester ; and there was, further, an old quarrel between Clarence and himself, the result of which led to the trial and condemnation of Clarence as a traitor. He was put to death secretly in the Tower, how, none could say with certainty. A story sprang up afterwards that he was drowned in a butt of wine.

Death of Edward IV. 1483.

In 1477 the strange career of the Burgundian duke Charles the Bold, was brought to an end on the battlefield of Nancy. His only child, Mary, married Maximilian, son of the emperor Frederick III., & left two children, a son, Philip, heir to the duchy and a daughter, Margaret, who, by the treaty of Arras (Dec. 24, 1482), was contracted to the French dauphin. It was clear, therefore, that Louis XI. had no intention of fulfilling his engagement that the dauphin should marry Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV. To the latter the disappointment

and most urgent need. On the death of Edward IV., his eldest son was allowed to succeed; and the only mode by which the poor child could be removed from a post which, from the circumstances of the time, he was incompetent to fill, was that of deposition followed by murder.

Edward V., a boy now twelve years old, had been born in the sanctuary of Westminster, where his mother had taken refuge on the expulsion of her husband from the throne. In the same sanctuary she again found shelter when she saw that the Duke of Gloucester, to whose care Edward IV. had on his death-bed commended his son, was resolutely set against her ascendancy. In fact, Richard already aimed at something more than the degradation of the queen-mother. He meant to be king, and, finding that he could not count on the aid of Lord Hastings, a favourite minister of Edward IV. and governor of Calais, he resolved on his death.

**Schemes of
Richard of
Gloucester.**

The story of the murder of Hastings is told by Sir Thomas More, who heard it, we cannot doubt, from Cardinal Morton, bishop of Ely, who was arrested by Richard at the same time. According to this tale, Richard, as Protector of the young king, appeared in the council chamber, about nine o'clock in the morning, with a manner singularly gracious, and remarking to the bishop of Ely that his strawberries were very fine, asked to have a mess of them. Leaving the room for about an hour, he returned in a very different mood, and with a frown on his face asked what punishment they deserved who should dare to plot against him as Protector in the English kingdom. When Lord Hastings said that they ought to be punished as traitors, Richard, baring his left arm, which had always been shrunk, had the astounding

**Murder of Lord
Hastings.**

assurance to exhibit it as evidence of the sorceries and witchcraft of his brother's wife and of Jane Shore, his favourite of Lord Hastings. The utterance of the latter name filled Hastings with a sense of his danger; but he summoned courage again to say that if they had done heinous acts, they deserved heinous punishment. "What? do you serve me with ifs and ands?" cried Richard; "I tell you they have done, and I will prove it on your body." On his giving this signal Hastings was arrested. "I will not die," added Richard, "till they have brought me your head." In a few minutes the work of murder was done.

Resolution of
Richard
Gloucester.

As Richard had begun, so he went on. He is not to be supposed to have been naturally cruel, and he was beyond doubt a man of great abilities and of unquestionable bravery. But he seems to have made up his mind that his only road to success lay through murder; and he steadily set himself to carry through the work which he had taken in hand. His first step was to obtain possession of his nephew Richard, and to s

Hence there is nothing to surprise us in the fact that, when Richard came forward to assert that his own title to the crown was better than that of his nephew, an assembly, styled a parliament, should at once admit his arguments, depose the reigning king, and offer Richard the crown. Not three months had passed since the death of Edward IV., when the child, Edward V., was thus thrust down from the throne which he had never sought to ascend.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE REIGN OF RICHARD III.

TECHNICALLY, Richard III. was no usurper; but neither was William the Conqueror in this sense an usurper (p. 157). Both received an offer of the crown, and both accepted it; and Richard, perhaps, made greater efforts to ingratiate himself with his subjects than were ever made by the Conqueror. He declined "benevolences" which were offered to him at Gloucester and at Worcester, and sought to make a deep impression on the popular mind by a splendid progress through the country.

But in London dark rumours were spread about the fate of the poor children in the Tower; and when a rising for their liberation was threatened, the people were told that an insurrection would be fruitless to set the dead free. Edward V. and his brother were murdered. This much all knew; and none, probably, doubted that the murder was perpetrated by Richard's order. Twenty years later some of those who were concerned in the crime threw a little light on the

mystery. According to them, Richard's order was sent to the governor of the Tower, Sir Robert Brackenbury, who refused to obey it. The order was followed by a command that he should deliver up all the keys of the Tower for one night to Sir James Tyrell, whose accomplices smothered the two children as they slept, and buried their bodies at the foot of a staircase, where they were found about two centuries later.

**Narrative of Sir
Thomas More.**

Sir Thomas More gives a graphic account of the remorse which seized on Richard after this foul crime. Never again, he tells us, had the king quiet in his mind. "When he went abroad, his eyes whirled about, his body privily fenced, his hand ever on his dagger, his countenance and manner like one always ready to strike again. He took ill rest at nights, late long waking and musing; sore wearied with care and watch, he rather slumbered than slept. So was his restless heart continually tossed and tumbled with the tedious impression and strong remembrance of his most abominable deed."

Ending of Hen-

For the three months of the child Edward, Richard



Bosworth; in which the two armies came into conflict, was one of fearful misery for Richard. But in the morning he appeared wearing his crown, and addressed his soldiers with more than his usual vigour. The fight soon became a hand-to-hand encounter; and Richard, seeing his rival, rushed at his bodyguard, and after a desperate resistance was cut down. His crown was placed on the head of the Earl of Richmond, who was instantly saluted as king.

So died, at the age of thirty-five, the last of the sovereigns belonging to the line of the Plantagenets. The feeling of the people towards him was shown with sufficient clearness in the indignities offered to his body, which was stripped and thrown across a horse with a halter round the neck, and buried with scant ceremony in the Greyfriars Church at Leicester (1485).

The Ending of
the Line of the
Plantagenets.
1485.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE REIGN OF HENRY VII.

THE new king was a younger man by seven years than the tyrant whom he had overthrown. He had been hailed as king on the battlefield, and he took care, at the fitting time, to urge this plea as confirming his title to the crown. But he was well aware that this question of title must for him be a thorny one. A parliament might be found to admit his right. But there was seemingly no right which a parliament could not be found to assert, so long as it was backed at the moment by might; and Henry felt that he should be standing on surer ground by carrying out his contract of marriage with Elizabeth,

Marriage of
Henry VII.
with Eliza-
beth, Daughter
of Edward IV.

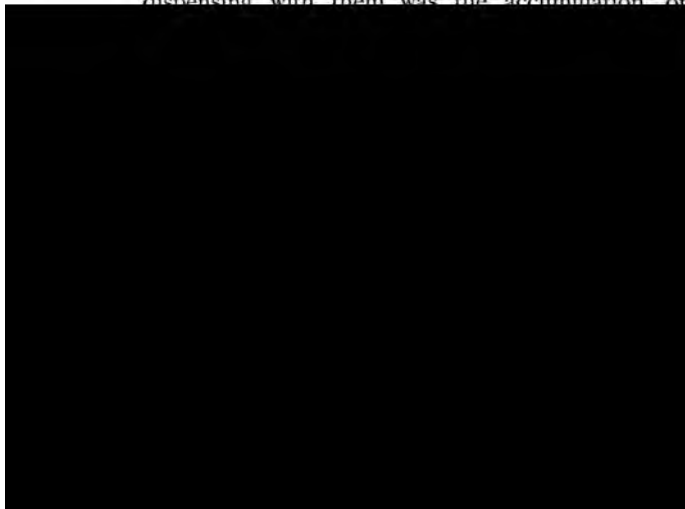
the daughter of Edward IV., thus uniting in a measure the Houses of York and Lancaster, and signifying the union by the adoption of the double rose, white and red, as the symbol of the Tudor sovereign.

rising of Lambert Simnel, 1487; and of Perkin Warbeck, 1497.

The weakness of his title explains, we can scarcely doubt, the two attempts made to dethrone him; the one by Lambert Simnel, who pretended to be a son of the Duke of Clarence, who had been put to death in the reign of Edward IV. (p. 306); the other, ten years later, 1497, by Perkin Warbeck, who professed himself to be the Duke of York, the younger brother (p. 308) of Edward V. Both were defeated, and Simnel became a scullion in the king's kitchen; Warbeck was executed in 1499.

Henry VII. and his Parliaments.

From the first Henry had made up his mind as to the course which it would be most prudent for him to follow. He was well content to work within the limits of the law, and he took care always to have the law on his side. But he had no special love for parliaments, and he saw that the readiest means of dispensing with them was the accumulation of



through peace, he avoided all wars, and strove especially to cement his alliance with Spain by bringing about the marriage of his son Arthur, prince of Wales, with Catherine of Arragon (1500). Arthur died soon after the marriage (1502), and by a papal dispensation Catherine became the wife of his brother, afterwards Henry VIII. (1509).

The discontinuance of parliaments was followed by a revival of the exactions, ironically termed benevolences (p. 305), which had been abolished in the reign of Richard III. Henry was, indeed, entering on the path of systematic exaction; and he was effectually aided by Cardinal Morton, whose dilemma, known as Morton's Fork, drew large sums from the citizens of London, those who lived splendidly being told that their way of living was sufficient evidence of their great wealth, and those who exhibited a shabby economy being informed that their thrift left them the better able to contribute largely to the king's needs.

The increase of his own resources was the more welcome to Henry, as it enabled him more effectually to curb the power of the nobles. The Wars of the Roses had swept away a large part of the old nobility, and in any future contest the victory must lie with the side which could most avail itself of the use of artillery; but guns were not like bows and arrows, which each peasant carried for himself, and which might be used by the nobles as easily as by the kings. The latter alone could command this new and most potent arm of war.

Still it was needful to place all possible checks on the influence of the greater nobles; and the Statute of Liveries struck at the military households which they took a pride in maintaining. This statute Henry enforced with such inflexible severity, that, being

Morton's Fork.

Effects of the Wars of the Roses.

Statute of Liveries.

received by the Lancastrian Earl of Oxford with great retinue of men wearing his livery, he than his host for his good show, but added that he could not have his laws broken in his sight, and that attorney must speak with him. The earl was pleased to escape with a fine of £10,000.

Operations of
Empson and
Dudley.

But, in truth, so long as he had the letter of law on his side, Henry cared little for the justice of methods which might be used for extorting money from his subjects; and in putting the law to use he found worthy helpers in two barons of exchequer, named Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley. These men revived all the dormant feudal claims of the crown, and enforced the payment of all arrears due under these claims. For those who failed to appear before them in personal actions the ready sentence was outlawry—a sentence which could be reversed on payment of a huge fine, which was, of course, the real motive of their judgment. Nor were these the only weapons in their legal economy.

It may be well to note the large differences between



that the nation only has the disposal of the national revenue.

England was then, in short, on the road to freedom ; but it had completed only a small portion of the journey. The condition of Englishmen differed from that of Frenchmen in three important points.

Difference be-
tween England
and France.

(1) There was here no caste of nobility ; it would be more strictly true to say that here there was no nobility of blood at all. The noble was one who, by virtue of his property and wealth, had acquired a position which led to his being summoned personally to join the councils of the king ; but his sons were in no way different from their fellow subjects ; and only the eldest son of an earl or baron became earl or baron on the death of his father. Membership of the House of Lords depended wholly on the king's writ. The noble summoned to one parliament might, or might not, be summoned to the next. He had no formal right to expect the writ, and he could not demand it. Still less could he hand on to his son a right of which he was not possessed himself.

Membership of
the House of
Lords.

But (2) for the whole body of the English people the burdens of feudalism had been lightened as they were lightened nowhere else in Europe, except, perhaps, for the peasants of Switzerland. There was one law only for all subjects, although the clergy still, in certain cases, claimed exemption from its operation. Money rents had come to be generally substituted for personal service ; and the effects of the Black Death had, as we have seen (p. 258), vastly improved the condition of the labourers.

Decay of Feu-
dalism in
England.

(3) The growth of the towns was constantly drawing off many from the country, who were tempted by the prospect of higher wages and a less monotonous life ; and this made it easier for those who remained to

Wages in the
Towns and
in the Country.

demand an increased rate of wages. But they had still many hardships to contend with. The spread of woollen manufactures had led to the establishment of large sheep farms; and many of the smaller tenants, failing to pay their rent, were ejected from their holdings. Of these not a few fell into the class of vagabonds or thieves, and incurred the savage penalties denounced against all such. All that can be said is, that something had been done towards getting rid of the evils of serfdom, and that the theory of serfdom had been swept away altogether.

**Beginnings of
English Colon-
isation.**

The reign of Henry VII. had, further, the effect of reconciling the Welsh to the rule of an English sovereign who was also a Welshman. At this time, also, were laid the foundations of English colonial empire. England had no share in the glory of the first discoveries of Christopher Columbus; but the mission of Sebastian Cabot won for her a vast region in the mighty continent of North America.

**The Revival of
Learning.**

Yet more, an influence was working, of which Henry was perhaps only dimly conscious, but which was to work a stupendous change throughout half, or more than half, of Christendom. The capture of Constantinople by the Turks (1453) had sent westwards a large number of Greeks, who carried with them the knowledge of the old Greek language and the old Greek literature. Men's minds were awakened, and many felt, for the first time, that they were really endowed with a capacity for thinking, weighing, and judging for themselves.

**Effects of the
Revival.**

The result was twofold. On the one side there was a revival of learning for its own sake, and so far for its own sake only, that it led some to a rejection of all religion, or to an attitude of doubt towards all beliefs. On the other, there was a growing con-

sciousness of the great and widespread evils which were marring the purity and the usefulness of the Christian Church. On the Continent these two influences ran, for the most part, in separate streams. In England they were, happily, to a great extent, blended.

At the head of the thinkers who devoted themselves to the cause of learning and of reform in this country, were John Colet, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, and Thomas More, afterwards chancellor. Colet had studied in Italy, and, returning to Oxford, lectured on the Epistles of St. Paul, not in order to explain what the theologians of the schools, as they were called, took them to mean, but to find out precisely what meaning they conveyed to those for whom they were written. He was genuinely anxious to stir up men's minds, and especially to improve the education of the young; but he was still more anxious to put down the abuses which in his belief were eating out the life of the Church, for whose destruction, as he said, the Popes were wickedly distilling poison.

More, who reached an eminence far higher than Colet, was not less earnest than Colet in the same great work. But more powerful than either was Erasmus, who had been compelled to become a monk against his will, and who, abandoning his monastery, came to Oxford and gained the friendship of these two fellow-workers. When, however, they urged him to stay and take part in the task which they had set before themselves, he promised that he would do so when he came to feel that he had the needful firmness and strength. For the present he said that he must study in Italy, and for that purpose he departed; but he was so mercilessly robbed by the custom-house officers at Dover that he could go

no farther than France. This plundering of an unoffending traveller was one of the instances of legal thieving on the king's behalf, in which Empson and Dudley were showing so much expertness.

Death of Henry
VII. 1509.

The iniquities of these men were plainly forced on the king's attention by preachers, who told him that his earthly life was drawing to a close. Henry professed to follow their counsel, and gave orders, it is said, that full justice should be done to all who had been injured. But the evil still went on, until the king died in the spring of the year 1509.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII.

Marriage of
Henry VIII.
with his Brother's
Widow.
1509.

A FEW weeks later his son and successor Henry VIII. married Catherine of Arragon, his brother Arthur's widow (p. 212). A papal dispensation sanctioning the

earnest of more careful and impartial government for the future.

The little band of thinkers who had been working quietly at Oxford thought that the time for which they had long hoped and prayed was really come, and that they might look for changes which might all tell for the benefit of England, of Europe, and of the world. Erasmus, appointed Greek professor of Cambridge, put out his satire, *The Praise of Folly* (*Encomium Morie*), in which he held up to ridicule and condemnation the abuses in the Church, and the vices of the clergy from the Pope downwards. Colet, now Dean of St. Paul's, founded St. Paul's School, in which the pupils were to be taught by kindness in place of the stripes and blows then universally in vogue, and were to receive knowledge which should set their minds working.

Efforts for Re-formation.

Both these men, as well as Thomas More, were ardent lovers of peace, and had an intense hatred for all merely political wars. But this dislike was by no means shared by the king. Henry had inherited a vast treasure, and he wished in his own person to equal or to surpass the glories of Henry V. It was well perhaps for his people that he should do so. Like his father, he was resolved that all his acts should have the sanction of law, and like him he knew how to make parliament his most useful and convenient instrument.

Ambition of the King.

For crimes which made the ears of those who heard of them tingle, he could always plead a solemn parliamentary sanction; but the truth is, that the councils which gave effect to his will or his caprice were not representative assemblies in the sense which we now attach to the phrase. The real mind of the people, it seems, had no mode of expressing itself

Parliaments of Henry VIII.

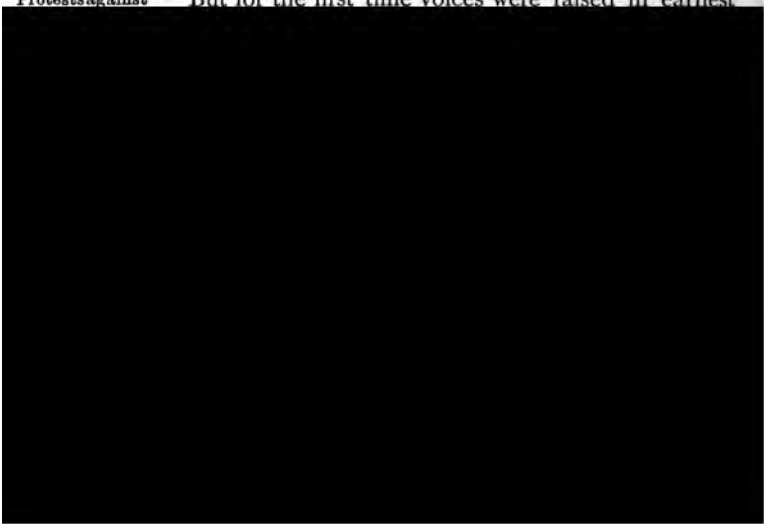
except by armed opposition ; and for the most part the popular mind was not roused. The iniquities which crushed individual men were, like those of the old Roman emperors, scarcely felt by the nation at large.

Battle of Flodden. 1513.

For the present Henry solaced himself by dreams of conquest. But these dreams led to more of disappointment than of success. In his first enterprise he won the barren battle of the Spurs at Guinegate in France, and before he returned to England his army in the north had fought and gained the memorable battle of Flodden Field, in which James IV. of Scotland fell with the flower of Scottish chivalry (Sept. 9, 1513). Other wars followed, which all helped to make Henry poorer ; and the lavish magnificence in ceremonials, like that of the Field of the Cloth of Gold (1520), left him poorer still, without bringing him a whit nearer his purpose of recovering the French provinces which had at some time or other belonged to kings of England.

Protests against

But for the first time voices were raised in earnest



write; every family had a vote, and the votes were all taken by ballot. We have seen that the Lollards, vehement as they were in denouncing the doctrines or theories which they had rejected, had not the faintest notion of sparing any who rejected their own conclusions (p. 286). It was not so with Thomas More, whose Utopian society proclaimed full toleration for all schools of thought and varieties of opinion, using in their worship a form so arranged as to hurt the feelings of none, and to express simply the brotherhood of all men in God their common Father.

For all these fancies or speculations Henry VIII. cared nothing. So far as they might further his own plans, he was quite ready to make use of them. But these men were working disinterestedly in the cause of truth and for the discovery of truth. Henry had no idea of working for anything except his own likings, wishes, and desires. He was ready to quarrel with the Pope if it should be necessary to do so; but so long as he thought that he might need the Pope's help, he was not less ready to maintain that the Papacy was an institution of divine authority. In this temper he wrote his book against the German reformer Martin Luther, who had no scruples in denouncing the Pope as the Antichrist; and for writing this treatise he received from Leo X. that title of "Defender of the Faith" which later English sovereigns have retained in a sense foreign to the mind of the pontiff who bestowed it.

Henry as Defender of the Faith.

The vehemence with which Henry maintained the divine authority of the Pope surprised Sir Thomas More, whose expressions of wonderment called forth from the king the confession that the papal authority alone could uphold his marriage with Catherine of Arragon. He was anxious at the time that his and

Henry and the Papal Authority.

her daughter Mary should succeed to the throne; and as he wished that the validity of the marriage should be placed beyond the reach of all gainsaying, so he was ready to assert the paramount authority of the Roman pontiff who alone could establish it. To him it was as easy to take up one position on the subject as another. It was otherwise with Sir Thomas More. The king's arguments carried to him a conviction never afterwards shaken, and this conviction brought him to the block.

Wolsey, Arch-
bishop of York.

When Henry at last applied to the Pope in reference to this marriage, it was for the purpose not of establishing its validity but of obtaining its nullification; and the man on whom he relied for carrying out this scheme was the cardinal legate, Thomas Wolsey, archbishop of York. This eminent man had been appointed one of the chaplains of Henry VII.; he had risen rapidly to the highest ecclesiastical dignities, and was now counting on being the second English occupant of the chair of St. Peter (p. 207).

Death of Wol-
sey. 1530.

The consciousness that the Pope and the emperor Charles V. might dispute the validity of his marriage with Catherine, and the legitimacy, therefore, of his daughter Mary, led the king to determine that the marriage should be pronounced void. Wolsey received the commission to promote and obtain the divorce. He exerted himself to the utmost to do so, and he failed (1526). Henry resolved to go his own way, and to marry Anne Boleyn, without heeding what the Pope might say or think about it. Wolsey was not prepared to quarrel with the Pope. He had no motive whatever for quarrelling with him. But he could no longer be of use to Henry, and parliament therefore condemned him for having used his legatine authority in prejudice of the royal prerogative (1529).

They would probably with the same ease have condemned him on any other charge which might have been brought against him. He was allowed to retain his archbishopric of York ; but a few months later he was summoned to London to answer to a charge of high treason. He reached the abbey of Leicester, and there died, expressing, it is said, the conviction that if he had served God as he had served his king, He would not have given him over in his old age (1530).

In the office of chancellor Wolsey was succeeded by Sir Thomas More ; and the parliament over which More was called to preside proceeded to deal with the whole subject of ecclesiastical abuses. They went at once to the root of the old controversies. Instead of debating as to the measure of power possessed by the Pope in this country, they transferred the whole papal jurisdiction bodily to the king, who assumed the title of Supreme Head of the Church of England ; and this title was, as we may suppose, confirmed by the parliament in 1534. Meanwhile Henry had married Anne Boleyn (1532), Cranmer, the archbishop of Canterbury, having declared the marriage with Catherine null and void ; and thus England was severed absolutely from the Papacy.

But Henry had not the remotest intention of allowing ecclesiastical or other reforms to take any other course than that which might suit or please himself. He had quarrelled with the Pope ; but he had not quarrelled with the doctrines, the ceremonial, and the discipline of Latin Christendom. There might be one or two points to which he might take exception ; and if he did, who had any right to object to his so doing ? But he was as ready as ever to defend

the faith against heretics. Tindal, for attempting to do again the work of Wyclif, had been hunted from the kingdom; and the man who had been foremost amongst his persecutors was Sir Thomas More himself.

Opposition of
Sir Thomas
More.

More's mind had, indeed, undergone some reaction. It could scarcely be otherwise, since the king had converted him to the strongest theory which could ever be advanced in favour of papal supremacy. He held the seals so long as Henry refrained from severing himself openly from the Roman obedience. When the breach was manifest, he resigned the seals (1532); but his resignation could not remove him beyond the reach of Henry's parliament. He was called upon to acknowledge Anne Boleyn as the lawful wife of the king. His answer (and in substance it was the answer returned by Fisher, bishop of Rochester) was, that he would readily acknowledge any child of Henry and Anne Boleyn as heir to the throne, if parliament should so declare, because parliament was omnipotent; but that he could

I can shift for myself." As he knelt at the block he put aside his beard, with the words, "Pity that should be cut which has not committed treason."

The brightest feature in More's character is the union of conscientiousness and truthfulness in himself, with full toleration of differences of opinion and belief in others; but it was, of course, impossible, under the conditions of the time, that the latter could be anything but a private opinion, in which practically he stood almost alone. Like Erasmus, however, he would have conceded toleration within the Church; and both hated schism more than they hated persecution.

Character of
More.

The tenor of Henry's reign had now undergone a marked change. His arbitrary will was enforced by a despotism of the worst sort, a despotism which uses the letter of the law and the machinery of constitutional government as the most convenient instruments of iniquity. The fact that this despotism had not yet made itself felt by the main body of the people, is perhaps the only explanation of the fact that he was allowed to go on in courses at which the world stood amazed.

Legal Despot-
ism of Henry
VIII

Henry's great minister, after the fall of Wolsey and More, was Thomas Cromwell, whom he made Earl of Essex. From Cromwell he eagerly learnt the lesson that, as supreme head of the Church, he was master of the wealth of all ecclesiastical and conventual bodies. A commission appointed for the general visitation of monasteries led to the decision that a large number of the lesser houses ought to be suppressed, as little better than dens of idleness and vice. From parliament Henry obtained a bill assigning to him the revenues of all monastic houses whose income fell short of £200 yearly (1535).

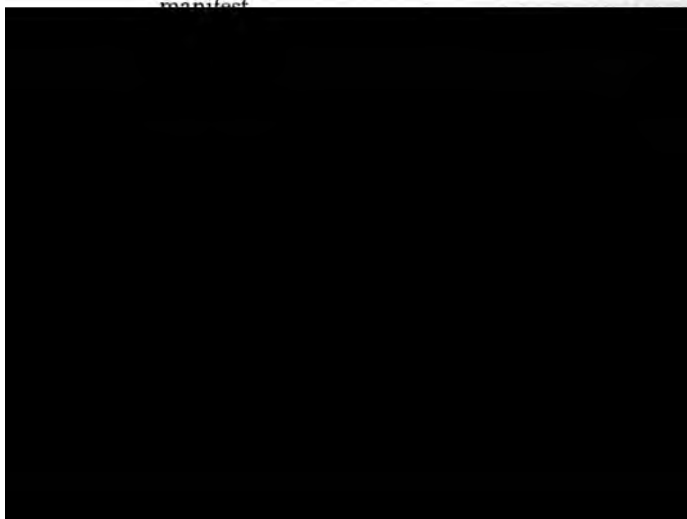
Suppression of
the lesser
Monasteries.
1535.

**The Pilgrimage
of Grace. 1536.**

Henry had touched a point on which the people could feel. The monastic houses had done much to relieve and lessen poverty and suffering, the injustice done to them led in the north counties to an insurrection, known as the Pilgrimage of Grace, which after some difficulty was suppressed (1536). The only effect of the movement was to hasten the ruin of the larger houses. The plea that some of them had encouraged their tenants to use the pilgrimage was alleged as a reason for their dissolution.

**Suppression of
the greater
Monasteries.**

It was, however, easy to multiply charges. If the king had not done this, they had impugned the royal supremacy, or condemned the rupture with Rome, or had indulged in too great magnificence. Another act of parliament suppressed the larger houses. The king became the lord of vast wealth, of which a large part was distributed amongst his personal friends and adherents. The burdens of the national taxation were but little lightened, and the increase of pauperism was manifest.



himself in white on the day of the execution, and on the following morning married Jane Seymour, who died in the following year, almost immediately after the birth of her son, who lived to be Edward VI. His next wife, Anne of Cleves, was chosen for him by Cromwell, to whom the choice was fatal. Anne was coarse-looking and dull. She was divorced, and Cromwell, condemned on a multitude of charges, was executed. For his fifth wife Henry chose Catherine Howard, niece of the Duke of Norfolk; but on a charge similar to that which had been brought against Anne Boleyn, she too was brought to the block, 1542. Catherine Howard was succeeded by his sixth wife, Catherine Parr, a widow, who, having narrowly escaped the fate of her predecessors, outlived the king.

Henry had on the whole succeeded fairly well in carrying out his detestable schemes. He had transferred to himself the jurisdiction which the Pope had thus far exercised or claimed in this country; and, having done this, he had insisted on the acknowledgment of all the old doctrines, or of such of them as he still approved. In this state of things he discerned a most convenient means for extending his own power. They who accepted his supremacy over the English Church were just those who were most likely to call into question some of these doctrines; and they who accepted the doctrines would be the most tempted to dispute his supremacy. The former he could visit with the penalties of heresy, and the latter with the penalties of treason. This double scourge was made ready to his hand by the horrible act known as the Statute of the Six Articles, passed by the parliament in 1541.

**Statute of the
Six Articles
1541.**

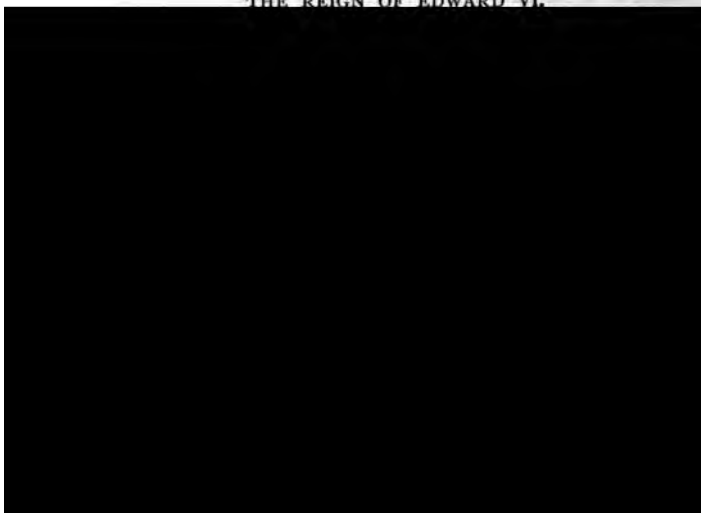
In the worldly sense of the phrase, Henry had

**Death of Henry
VIII. 1547.**

lived well ; and the indulgence of appetite had made him so hugely fat, that he could not support the weight of his body, and was moved about only by machinery. But the discovery of plots, or of alleged plots, with the penalties following them, were to go on to the end. This time the conspiracy, it is said, was to place the young prince Edward in the hands of the Howards. The Duke of Norfolk was attainted ; his son, the Earl of Surrey, was condemned and executed. The duke himself escaped the same lot only by the king's death. Henry had sent an order for his execution on the previous evening. He was dead before it could be carried out ; and the order was suspended. The attainder was reversed in the reign of queen Mary.

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE REIGN OF EDWARD VI.



of the prince under whom the crowns of England and Scotland were at length united. In this scheme he failed. He was more successful in his efforts to promote ecclesiastical and religious reform.

Henry VIII., as we have seen, had no intention that his subjects should have any other belief than that which he might choose for them; and his choice was that in all essential respects they should adhere to the faith of Latin Christendom, abjuring only the supremacy of the Pope, or rather transferring that supremacy to the king. The Duke of Somerset could not be satisfied to confine himself within these limits; and his feelings were fully shared by Cranmer, the archbishop of Canterbury, who after Henry's death found a good many faults in the doctrine of the Latin or Roman Church which he had not discovered in it before.

Somerset and the Reformation.

But care and prudence were needed in this work, in which they found themselves formidably opposed by Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, and Bonner, bishop of London. Still the process of change was carried on, sometimes for good, sometimes for harm. The clergy received permission to marry; in other words, the freedom of which they had only lately been deprived was restored to them (p. 191). At the same time, laws of the most horrible and barbarous severity were enacted against vagrants or mendicants, who had become such after the suppression of the monastic houses, small and great.

Marriage of the Clergy.


Cranmer's next step was to draw up a catechism "for the singular profit and instruction of young people," and to prepare a Liturgy which should supersede the order of the Roman missal, and which is in substance the present English Book of Common Prayer. But both Cranmer and Somerset had entered

The Book of Common Prayer. 1549.

on thorny paths. The latter had a younger brother Thomas Seymour, who had been made Lord Seymour of Sudeley, and who married Catherine Parr, widow of Henry VIII. Seymour was High Admiral of England, and his ambition was fully equal to that of the Protector, his elder brother. But that brother was resolved on his ruin. Seymour was convicted of treason and executed; and Latimer, bishop of Worcester, preached a sermon, vehemently justifying the action of Somerset.

Insurrections
in the English
Counties.
1549.

The suppression of the monasteries had excited popular commotions in the time of Henry VI. The introduction of the new Prayer-Book and Liturgy produced the same effect now. Insurrections took place in a large number of the English counties. The most formidable was the rising of the men of Norfolk, under Kett, a tanner, who was also lord of three manors in the county. These movements showed the mind of the people in greater or less degree, but they were broken up by offers of a general pardon, from which a few of the ringleaders only



household promised obedience to the king's command ; Mary remained inflexible. "If my chaplains do say no mass," she said, "I can hear none. They may do therein as they will ; but none of your new service shall be read in my house, or I will not tarry in it."

On the other hand, there were not a few who propounded notions or doctrines which were deemed extravagant, ridiculous, or unintelligible. Of these some were priests, some laymen. One of the most prominent was Joan Bocher, a female preacher in Kent. Joan was condemned ; but Edward refused to consent to her execution ; and it was only owing to Cranmer's long-continued and earnest expostulations, that at the end of a year he allowed the sentence to be carried out. Nor was Joan Bocher the only victim whom on charges of heresy Cranmer consigned to the flames.

Execution of
Joan Bocher.
1550.

Somerset had fallen from his first greatness ; but he was still a man of dangerous influence, and he was especially hated by John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, a son of Dudley, the unscrupulous minister of Henry VII. (p. 314). Warwick was now made Duke of Northumberland, and he succeeded at last in bringing Somerset to the block.

Execution of
Somerset. 1552.

The health of the young king soon gave warning of further troubles. He had never been strong, and he was not disposed to listen to the advice of his physicians. But when after a short recovery he again became more prostrate than before, the Duke of Northumberland pressed upon him the paramount duty of providing that the crown should not pass to an obstinate papist such as was his sister Mary. Edward was eager to follow his counsel and do all that he could, and more than he had any right to do, to prevent so dire a catastrophe.

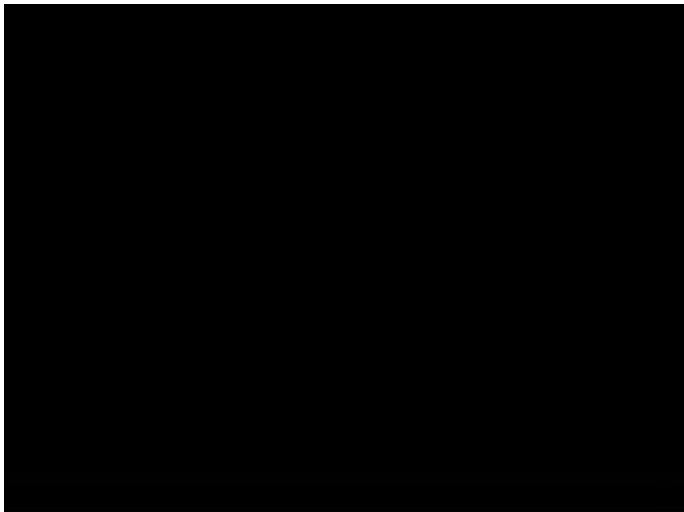
Illness of the
King.

The King's Will.

With his own hand he drew out a paper, in which crown was entailed first "on the Lady Fraunces' heirs mayles," and next on "the Lady Janes heirs mayle. But this paper excluded the two women, although included their sons. Northumberland scored out letter "s" after the name "Jane," and inserted two words *and her*. The sentence now ran, "to Lady Jane and her heirs mayles." The paper, thus altered, was signed by the king; and it cost the life of Lady Jane Grey.

Death of Edward VI. 1553.

Northumberland's next effort was to secure person of the princess Mary. A royal order summoned her to London; but on her journey she received warning which made her hurry back into Norfolk. A few days later Edward died (July 6, 1553); but his death was carefully concealed. Northumberland needed time to arrange the measures necessary to exclude Mary by the elevation of Lady Jane Grey to the throne.



shriek, and sank upon the ground, confessing her unfitness for the office, and praying that, if the right was hers, she might be enabled to discharge it for the good of the people.

Mary lost not a moment in asserting her own claim ; and popular opinion ran strongly on her side. Rumours were spread that Northumberland had brought about the deaths of the High Admiral Seymour, of Somerset, and of King Edward, and that the poisoning of Jane Grey would open his own way to the throne. It was in vain that he strove to identify the cause of Lady Jane with that of the Reformation. Mary was at the head of a powerful volunteer army, which served without pay. After a painful reign (if such it can be called) of nine days, Jane left the town and went to Sion House, and Northumberland was driven to proclaim queen Mary. But he had offended too deeply for pardon. On the scaffold he declared that ambition only had tempted him to conform to the new worship, which in his heart he condemned. In short, his own exaltation had been the one motive for all his acts.

The possession of the crown was followed almost immediately by the declaration of her intention to marry. Gardiner, the bishop of Winchester, wished to bring about her union with Edward Courtenay, whom Mary made Earl of Devon, and whose grandmother was a daughter of Edward IV. But Courtenay's vices rendered this plan impossible. The next proposal came to her from the emperor Charles V., who prayed her to marry his son Philip, afterwards Philip II., king of Spain. The idea of this marriage was regarded with satisfaction by few Englishmen, and with deep dislike by many. There were risings in

Execution of
Northumber-
land. 1553.

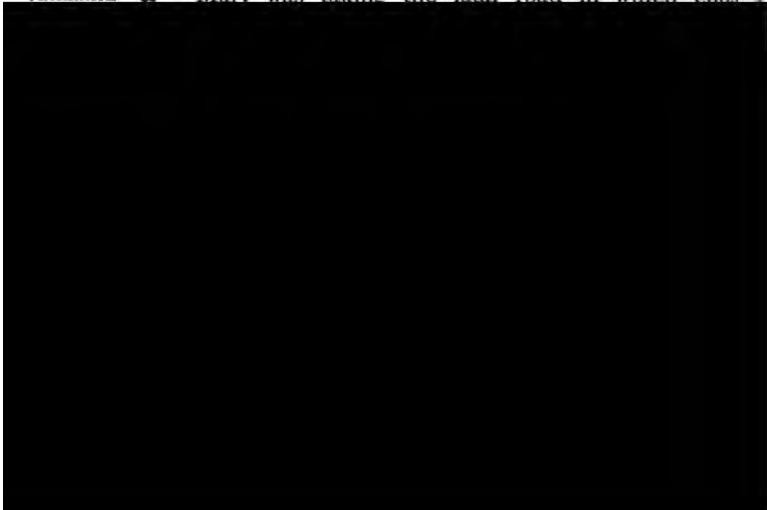
Project of Mar-
riage between
Mary and
Philip of Spain.

many parts of the country, and the rebellion of Sir Thomas Wyatt assumed formidable proportions.

Suppression of
the Rebellion
of Sir Thomas
Wyat. 1554.

Going to the Guildhall, Mary told the citizens of London that without the approval of parliament she would most assuredly never marry at all. "Wherefore," she added, "stand fast against these rebels, and fear them not, for I assure you I fear them nothing at all." After fierce fighting the insurrection was suppressed; and Wyatt paid the penalty of failure with his life. But his conspiracy was fatal also to one who was wholly guiltless of any share in it. Lady Jane Grey and her husband had been thus far spared; an order was now sent for the execution of both, in pursuance of the sentence passed upon them three months before. Jane was but seventeen years of age, and she declared with thorough truth that the device of raising her to the throne was none of her seeking, and that she washed her hands as to the procurement or desire of such dignity by her.

Vacillation of Mary was taking the fatal road in which ends



queen's permission he was ready to show that it contained many horrible blasphemies.

Cranmer was partly on the losing, and partly on the winning side. Four years only had passed since the introduction of the new English Liturgy, and for this the people thus far cared little or nothing. But he was much more in accord with popular feeling when he set himself against the papal supremacy and jurisdiction. This had never been congenial to Englishmen, and for thirty years they had been wholly free of it. He had further on his side all who had received any portion of the ecclesiastical property confiscated on the dissolution of the monastic houses.

Cranmer and the People.

But parliament was as pliable and obedient to Mary as it had been to her Tudor predecessors. The marriage of Henry with Catherine of Arragon was fully confirmed; and the reformed Liturgy was set aside as "a new thing, imagined and devised by a few of singular opinions." The marriage of the queen with Philip of Spain, celebrated on the 25th of July, 1554, brought her still nearer to the object of her desires. Once more a papal legate was seen in this country in the person of Cardinal Pole, who absolved the kingdom from the guilt of schism; and Gardiner preached at St. Paul's Cross a sermon in which he bitterly bewailed his own share in substituting the royal for the papal supremacy, and besought all who had been influenced by him to return with him to the unity of Latin Christendom.

Reconciliation of the Kingdom with the Pope. 1554.

But although the work of reconciliation was accomplished, and the papal legate Pole became archbishop of Canterbury, one thing was lost beyond all hope of recovery. To restore the ecclesiastical lands to their former owners would be to make enemies of their present possessors, the most powerful

The Property of the Monastic Houses.

subjects of the crown. The parliament confirmed these possessions, while in all other respects it restored the old system as it had been before Henry VIII. began to meddle with it.

Persecution of
Archbishop
Cranmer.

Cranmer and his chief adherents, Latimer (p. 330) and Ridley (p. 330), must have seen that for them a time of trouble was at hand. Of toleration, as the word is now understood, they had no more idea than Lord Cobham and his followers (p. 286). We have seen how Cranmer influenced Edward VI. in the case of Joan Bocher (p. 331); and he had been careful during Edward's reign to specify a belief in transubstantiation or a denial of the doctrine of justification by faith only as among heresies to be punished by fire by the secular arm. He was, therefore, fully prepared to burn others; he was now to have his own weapons turned against himself.

Chancellorship
of Gardiner.
1555.

It was not on his own head that the storm first broke. In January, 1555, six prisoners appeared before Gardiner as chancellor. The most conspicuous among them were John Rogers, the colleague of Tindal (p. 324) in the translation of the Bible, and Hooper, bishop of Gloucester. All were condemned; but Hooper pleaded to no purpose that he had been led to reject the supremacy of the Pope by the writings of Gardiner himself. For whatever reason, Gardiner never sat again as judge in such trials, but left his place to be filled by Bonner, bishop of London. For both it may be urged (whatever the plea may be worth) that they were simply administrators of an existing law, and that they administered it with all the moderation, and even lenity, in their power.

Execution of
Ridley and
Latimer.
1555.

After Hooper and Rogers, the turn came to Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer. All three were taken to Oxford. The two former were dealt with more

summarily, and, being handed over to the secular power, were burnt in the Broad Street. During the greater part of his career Latimer had been a vehement assertor of the reformed doctrines; but he had been a not less determined opponent of Melancthon and other reformers in Germany. In such a turmoil of thought and opinion, consistency could scarcely be looked for at all; but it was certainly not found in either Latimer or Cranmer.

When from the window of his prison Cranmer saw his colleagues led away to the stake, his courage wavered for a moment. It underwent a greater shock when he learnt that the Pope, Paul IV., had given judgment against him. In seven different documents he condemned his past conduct, and approved the system which he had endeavoured to overthrow. Had Ridley and Latimer recanted, their lives would have been spared. Cranmer had recanted as fully as it was possible for any one to recant, and his life was not spared. The reason alleged by the council was, that he had brought about the schism in the days of Henry VIII., and had introduced the new worship under Edward VI.

**Recantation of
Cranmer.**

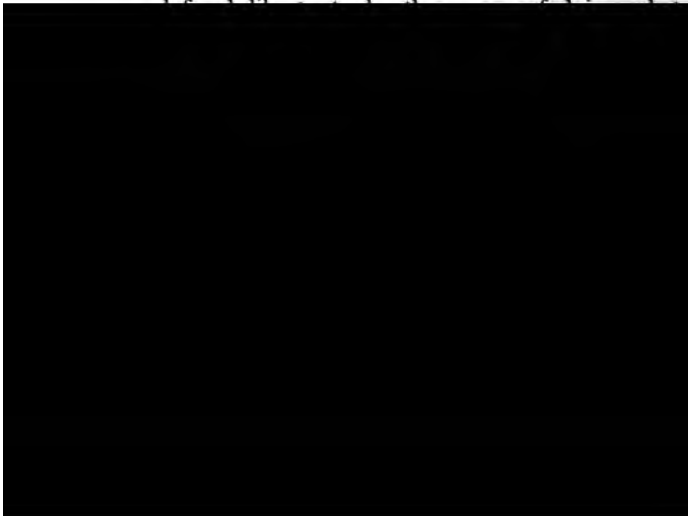
The order was issued for his execution; and in a fresh recantation he confessed that his guilt in persecuting the Church exceeded that of Paul, but trusted that, like the penitent thief on the cross, he might yet obtain mercy. He had blasphemed, he said, against the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and had deprived men of the benefits to be obtained from it; and he besought the Pope to forgive his offences against the apostolic see. His humiliation failed to obtain his pardon; and when the time for execution was come he withdrew his recantations, and declared that the hand which had written them should be the

**Execution of
Cranmer.**

first to receive punishment. On the kindling of fire he accordingly thrust his right hand into flames, and in a few moments his sufferings ended.

Cranmer's Character.

The picture before us is a terrible one ; and shows how hard the path is of those who do not walk in a single-minded love of truth for its own sake. As has been said of Cranmer by Lord Macaulay, "Intolerance is always hateful ; but the sanguinary intolerance of a man who thus wavered in his course excites a loathing to which it is difficult to give name without calling foul names." There can be no question that under the old system there were many evils which Cranmer might well feel called on to remove down at all costs, while there were other points at which there might be honestly some question. His great offence was not so much the ebb and flow of his own belief, as the cool calculation with which he took his measures for crushing those who reached conclusions opposed to his own. It is said that



present owners, added to this alarm. The transference of the legatine powers from Pole to an obscure Franciscan friar, convinced the queen that even the Pope cared little for her friendship or her aid; and the sudden capture of Calais, the last English possession on the Continent, by a French army, completed her humiliation. Her strength failed rapidly, and her death, Nov. 17, 1558, was followed in a few hours by that of her kinsman, Cardinal Pole, the last Roman Catholic archbishop of Canterbury.

CHAPTER LXXI.

THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH.

England and Scotland.

AT the outset of her reign Elizabeth was free from the anxieties which had oppressed her sister Mary and her innocent kinswoman Jane Grey. No one disputed her title, and knowing that on her sister's death, which was looked for from day to day, the crown must come to herself, she was prepared to receive with a set and studied speech the counsellors who came to announce her accession. Sir William Cecil, the secretary of Edward VI., who had suggested the terms of her answer, was appointed to the same post under his sister, and with his immediate friends he formed a cabinet which carried on the real work of government, while the general body of the council served rather for the purposes of show.

Her first controversy was with the Pope, Paul IV., a man more than eighty years of age. Her ambassador

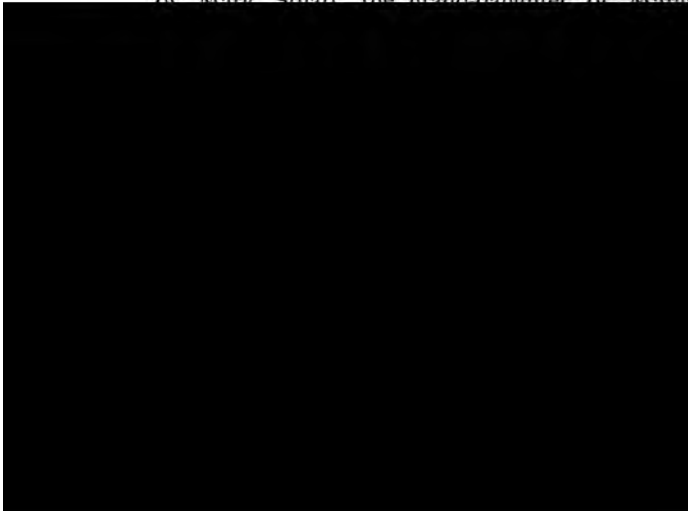
Accession of
Elizabeth.
1558.

Elizabeth and
the Pope.

announced her accession as "by hereditary right the consent of the nation." Sir Thomas More (p. 3) had long ago consented to admit this title, although he did not believe that her mother was Her lawful wife ; but the Pope had been told that if made the acknowledgment he would be approving a union which he held to be null and void, and judging the claim of Mary queen of Scots, whom regarded as the legitimate heir. His answer, therefore, was, that Elizabeth must submit her claim to arbitration, and that it should be weighed, so far as might be possible to do so, in her favour.

**Dangers of
Papal Inter-
ference.**

Elizabeth and her ministers saw that, if the country was to maintain its independence, this question of her title was one with which no foreign ruler must be permitted to meddle. The answer of the Pope showed that he was not satisfied with a title which the people of England seemed willing to accept. This was this the full extent of the danger. A claimant for her crown was already in the field, in the person of Mary Stuart, the grand daughter of Mary



without a dispensation from the Pope, and to ask for such a dispensation would at once bring up the question of her title for the judgment of the Holy See. This alliance was therefore rejected, and Philip gave way to the long series of suitors, from whose hopes or ambitions she might, without committing herself irrevocably to any, derive some political advantage.

Her first serious task was to bring together a parliament which should carry out her plans; nor was she in this less successful than her immediate predecessors. The ecclesiastical work of Mary's reign was at once undone, and the royal supremacy re-established (1559). The chief opposition came from the bishops, who were all deprived, with the exception of one, who conformed to the new order. The archbishopric of Canterbury had been left vacant by the death of Cardinal Pole; and, according to the existing law, the archbishop must be consecrated by four bishops. But four bishops consecrated according to the Roman pontifical were not to be found. The difficulty was met by appointing four bishops deprived under Mary, to consecrate the new primate, Matthew Parker, who, with their help, proceeded to consecrate the prelates named to the other sees.

If these decisive steps had been delayed somewhat longer, the subsequent religious history of the country might have been very different. The new Pope, Pius IV., was no sooner elected than he sent a nuncio, offering to sanction the English Prayer-Book, and demanding only the recognition of the papal supremacy. But Elizabeth had committed herself to what is called the Protestant side, and she forbade the nuncio to enter England. The breach with Rome was complete.

**The English
Church and
Nation.**

But although Elizabeth was Protestant, so far as the rejection of papal claims was concerned, she had no sympathy with the forms of thought and belief which are denoted by the term Puritanism, or with the worship which Puritans would have established if they could. Nor had she any idea of allowing Puritans to set up any order or society of their own. As in the times preceding Henry VIII., so now, the English Church was only the English nation in religious aspect (p. 39); and a minority could be more suffered to oppose the ecclesiastical than could be permitted to overthrow the political constitution of the land.

**Efforts of Philip
of Spain in the
Cause of Cath-
olicism.**

For the present the great controversy to be settled was that of the authority by which the Pope challenged the obedience of all Christendom; and the quarrel which had sprung from this claim Europe was now the battlefield. To the cause of the Pope, or, as it was called, Catholicism, Philip of Spain devoted himself with a zeal which surpassed that of the Popes themselves. It was in the hope of restoring the unity of Latin Christendom that he



Francis II. died (1560), and Mary resolved to do what she held to be her duty in her own kingdom.

She entered it (1581), claiming for herself the title not only of queen of Scotland, but of queen of England also.¹ With her husband Francis, she had assumed the arms of England, and she claimed the English crown by virtue of her direct descent from Henry VII., to the exclusion of one whose mother had never been a lawful wife.

Claim of Mary of Scotland to the English Crown.

The prospect before her was not without signs of future troubles and disasters. The Reformation in Scotland had taken the line of that dark and stern theology which is associated more particularly with the name of Calvin; and the chief agent in giving it this direction was John Knox, who at Geneva had published a fierce attack on his sovereign in a book entitled "The monstrous Regiment [government] of women." By sermons on idolatry he had so stirred the passions of the multitude, that at Perth and elsewhere the sculptured work in the churches was hacked to pieces, and the great ecclesiastical buildings were dismantled, and left to the ravages of time and weather.

The Reformation in Scotland.

But there was much, on the other hand, to warrant hopes of Mary's success. Her beauty, her gracefulness, her refined tact in dealing with men of every class and disposition, exercised a wonderful charm over all except the Puritan preachers, who shut their ears and their eyes to all such charming. Her abilities were as striking as her beauty; and the enthusiasm which she awakened in the hearts of her subjects was scarcely deeper than the fears which she stirred in the cool and calculating mind of the English rival whom she purposed to dethrone.

Personal Influence of Mary.

¹ See Genealogy VI.

Points of Likeness between Mary and Elizabeth.

Mary and Elizabeth had, indeed, not a few points in common. Neither was troubled with many scruples of conscience; neither stuck at any falsehood which might serve her turn; neither hesitated to heap lie on lie, if anything was to be gained by so doing, or to make use of any means, however foul, for the furtherance of her plans. But in all her falsehood and evil-doing Elizabeth was working on behalf of and in concert with the main body of her people, while Mary worked for herself alone.

Imprudence of Mary.

For Mary, therefore, in a far greater degree than for Elizabeth, prudence, discretion, and wary walking were indispensably necessary; and it was precisely by allowing passion to take the place of the sound judgment with which she was eminently endowed, that she made shipwreck of all her hopes and plans.

Marriage of Mary with Lord Darnley. 1565.

The first downward step was her marriage (1565) with her cousin, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, who was also a great-grandson of Henry VII. Darnley was, further, a Catholic; and by her union with him Mary virtually avowed herself the champion of the Catholic world, and was regarded as such by queen Elizabeth. But a few months only had passed before it became known that her wedded life was miserable. Her husband was little better than a vicious ruffian, who sought to avenge his own wrongs by allying himself with the chief of the Protestant party. With them he served as an accomplice in the murder of the Italian, David Rizzio, whom they dragged from Mary's side, and stabbed to death with a multitude of wounds. (March 9, 1566.)

Mary and the Earl of Bothwell.

Disguising her wrath, Mary, with consummate skill, contrived to detach Darnley from his associates; and the birth of her son (afterwards James the Sixth of Scotland, and the First of England) added to the strength

of her position. But she had attained this position in great part by the help of James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell; and the offices and gifts bestowed upon him showed, at the least, that her feelings towards him were those of the liveliest gratitude. For Darnley she expressed only hatred or contempt. Unless she could be freed of him in some way, she declared that she had no pleasure to live; but suddenly this bitter language was exchanged for words and signs of tenderness.

Darnley had been seized with smallpox, and Mary, M^y
l having visited him in his sickness, induced him to go with her to Edinburgh. Here he was lodged in a lonely house without the city walls, in a part known as the Kirk of Field; and here Mary left him with kindly words to attend a ball at Holyrood. About midnight a great explosion was heard; the house in the Kirk of Field was blown up. Darnley's dead body was found close to the ruins; but there were no signs of fire on it. It was soon known that Bothwell's servants had stored the powder beneath Darnley's chamber, and that Bothwell himself was watching near the house until the deed was done. (Feb. 10, 1567.)

One hindrance was thus removed to her marriage with Bothwell, for on this he or she or both had resolved. But Bothwell had a wife already, and of her he rid himself by a divorce. He was tried for Darnley's murder, but no one dared to appear as his prosecutor. The result was an acquittal; and now, having bound the chief lords of Scotland to approve the union, he seized Mary as she was returning from Stirling, and carried her off to his castle of Dunbar. In May 1567 they were married, and Mary's reputation was ruined, not only in her own kingdom, but throughout Europe. For a moment it seemed M.
E
v

that Bothwell would make an effort to maintain ground by force ; but, seeing that he had no chance of success, he gave up the struggle, and fled first his duchy of Orkney, and thence to Denmark, next to set foot on Scottish soil again.

**Battle of Lang-
side, and
Flight of Mary
into England.
1568.**

Before his escape Mary had surrendered herself Carberry Hill (June, 1567). Within a few days a casket was produced containing her letters to Bothwell. If genuine, they would fully prove her guilt but their genuineness is still a matter of debate. They were, however, held as evidence that she was privy to Darnley's murder ; and she was compelled to do a deed, abdicating her throne in favour of her infant son, and giving the regency to her half-brother, Murray. But within a year she escaped from her prison Lochleven Castle, and met the forces of the regent on the field of Langside, 1568. Her troops were defeated, and Mary hurried away to Workington, and thence to Carlisle, where she demanded the protection of Elizabeth, or her permission to pass through England to France.

**Captivity of
Mary Queen
of Scots**

Thus began a miserable captivity of nearly twenty years, spent in intrigues and plots first for



CHAPTER LXXII.

THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH (*continued*).*England and the Catholic Sovereigns of Europe.*

THE death of the Scottish queen seemed to the English people generally to free them from long-continued and pressing dangers. In reality it stimulated Philip of Spain to the great enterprise which, more perhaps than any other of his plans, tended to weaken and bring about the downfall of the Spanish kingdom. He had, indeed, other causes besides Mary's death to urge him on to action. English mariners were dealing heavy blows on the maritime supremacy of Spain. Drake had fulfilled his vow of singeing king Philip's beard, by seizing and carrying to Plymouth the largest of his treasure-ships laden with Indian gold. Pope Sixtus V. bestowed on Philip his blessing and large sums of money to aid him in his work; and in May 1588 the "most fortunate and invincible Armada" left the shores of Spain, for the purpose of destroying the English navy, and of covering the descent of the Duke of Parma, with a Spanish army from the Netherlands, on the English coast, for the conquest of the English kingdom.

The Spanish
Armada. 1588.

Elizabeth was ill prepared for this attack; and in truth she seemed to think that no attack at all was to be feared. Philip's enterprise was met and defeated, not so much by any foresight on the part of the English queen, as by the efforts of the English people, whom the death of the Scottish queen Mary had really united. Philip could no longer profess that he was

General Feeling
of the English
People.

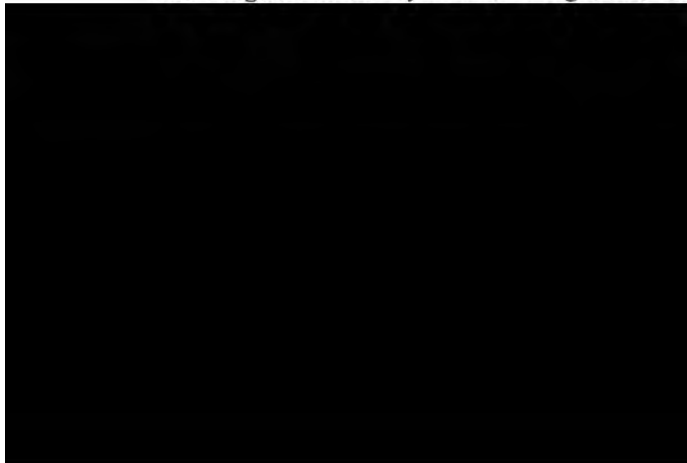
upholding her claims as against those of the daughter of Anne Boleyn; and therefore Catholics and Protestants were alike prepared to resist a wanton foreign interference with the affairs of Englishmen.

**The Ruin of the
Armada.**

Harassed by the English cruisers, the Armada reached Calais and Gravelines; and here the catastrophe began. Six English fire-ships, all a mass of flame, were borne by a favouring breeze against the huge and cumbrous vessels of the Spaniards. Their captains in despair cut their cables, and in a struggle to reach the open sea some were burnt, others driven on the Flemish coast; the remainder made their escape into the North Sea. The Spaniards hoped to sail round Scotland, and so get back to Spain; but winds and waves so did their work of ruin, that of 30,000 men, only 10,000 reached their homes, and out of 132 ships, only 53 cast anchor in Spanish harbours.

**Elizabeth
at Tilbury.**

Elizabeth's courage is beyond question; and she certainly spoke only the truth when she told the volunteers at Tilbury that she placed her chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of



and tyranny in the Netherlands had given a great impetus to English trade and commerce. New wealth and the sense of new wants were changing the character of English dwellings; and the stately mansions of Elizabethan nobles and gentlemen vied with each other in splendours unknown to the palaces of kings in the days of the Plantagenets. Far more slowly, but yet sensibly, the condition of the poor was being improved, and before the close of Elizabeth's reign the new poor law recognised in some sort the right of the sick and the helpless to food, clothing, and shelter (1601).

But more wonderful in its abundant and varied activity was the intellectual life which in Elizabeth's reign yielded its abundant harvest in the wide fields of poetry and the drama, of history and of science. This harvest may not have been reaped without gathering in a certain amount of worthless weed. The conceits of the Italianized jargon known as the language of Euphuism, from Lyly's romance of *Euphues*, may be compared to tares sown amidst corn; but its absurdities were redeemed by many compensating merits in Sir Philip Sidney's romance of *Arcadia*. Sidney died in the first bloom of manhood, in a skirmish rather than a battle on the field of Zutphen (Sept. 22, 1586); but his gentleness and his heroic bravery, his refinement, grace, and taste, made him the idol and the glory of his age.

That age was rich in learning of all kinds. Francis Bacon—whom, if we spoke of him by his title, we should call, but whom no one calls, Lord Verulam—was one of the greatest pioneers of the modern scientific method which reasons from facts to laws, and not from theories to facts. But the region in which Elizabethan achievement has most impressed

Poetry and the
Drama in the
Age of Eliza-
beth.

the imagination of later times, is that of poetry ; the drama. The forms of ancient chivalry, which had lost their meaning in common life, were employed by Spenser to give point to the battle between truth and falsehood, in the cantos of his "Faerie Queene." In this great poem, the Red Cross Knight, an embodiment of Puritan religion, is led astray for a time into the house of Ignorance by the sultry Duessa, who represents the Church of Rome. The popular taste was more immediately affected by the efforts of the dramatists. Of these some have remained, obscure ; others, like Grendel and Marlowe, blazed into notoriety, and passed suddenly away ; some, like Ben Jonson, Massinger, and Beaumont, have deservedly won for themselves a lasting name ; and one towers above all as a poet for all time.

Shakespeare.

This poet is William Shakespeare, of whose personal life our knowledge is of the scantiest and most uncertain sort. He was born (1564) early in Elizabeth's reign, at Stratford-on-Avon, and there, in the

the country was growing in wealth and in power. The relative positions of Spain, France, and England had greatly changed. Elizabeth was, apart from the maintenance of her own personal splendour, penuriously frugal, and thus she avoided many of those difficulties which her predecessors had experienced in dealing with their parliaments, and which were to press with vastly greater weight on her successors. She was perhaps disposed in herself to be as imperious and as arbitrary as her father had been, or as the Stuarts were after her.

But her good sense seldom failed her; and when she found it necessary to draw back, she did so frankly and with a good grace. Thus she expressed her readiness to revoke all illegal grants of monopolies, by which the profits of the sale of some commodity were secured to some one of her favourites or courtiers; and at the same time she thanked the Commons for pointing out to her a mistake into which she had fallen by error of judgment. The admission that she really had erred from this cause, would be a very charitable construction; but it was well to throw this colour over an abuse which, if persisted in, might have led to dangerous results.

Discretion of
the Queen.

After the catastrophe of the Armada, Spain gradually but surely lost its old predominance. In 1596, Cadiz was taken by a fleet under the command of Admiral Howard and the Earl of Essex, the special favourite of the queen. This young man would willingly have carried on the war against Spain more vigorously and thoroughly; but Elizabeth and Burleigh were both anxious for peace, and they thought that a fitter field for the energies of Essex could be found in Ireland.

Capture of
Cadiz. 1596.

The results of his rule there were far from satis-

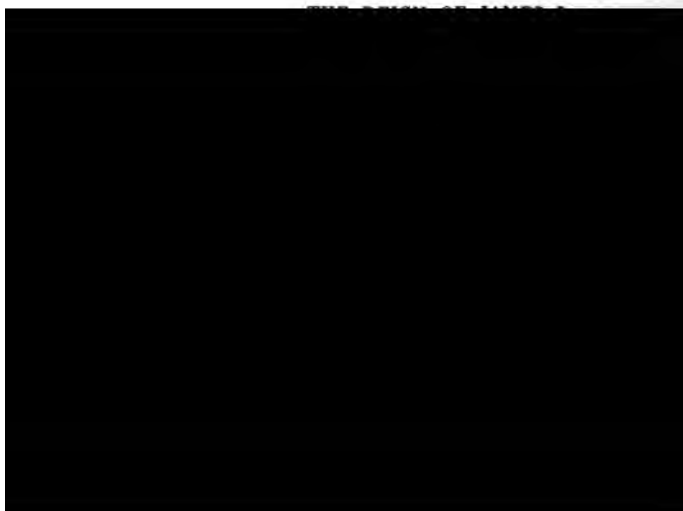
Execution of
Essex. 1601.

factory ; and on his return to England he was ordered to remain as a prisoner in his own house. His impatience and indignation led him into scheme of revolt or rebellion ; but on marching through the country he vainly summoned the citizens to take his side. Essex was brought to trial and condemned to death for high treason (1601).

Death of Elizabeth.
1603.

For Elizabeth it was a terrible grief to sign a warrant for his execution, but it was extorted from her ; and with this event her own life may be said to have virtually come to an end. She became restless, moody, and sullen. She thrust her sword into a tapestry, as though fancying that traitors lay hid behind it. On the 24th of March, 1603, she died. She had reigned forty-five years, and she was sixty-nine years of age.

CHAPTER LXXIII.



Thus was brought about that union, not of the two kingdoms, but of the crowns of England and Scotland, for which Edward I. and other kings had longed and struggled, and which might have been brought about by the union of Edward of Carnarvon with the Maid of Norway (p. 226), or by the marriage of Edward VI. with the beautiful princess whose earthly troubles were to be ended in the hall of Fotheringay (p. 346).

Union of the
Crowns
of
Scotland and
England.

The results of James's accession strangely belied the fears which had haunted Elizabeth and some of her courtiers. James was neither a Papist nor a Puritan (pp. 342, 350). He had at one time expressed his thankfulness that he was a member of "the purest kirk in the world;" but the yoke of the Genevan (p. 343) theology and discipline had become so irksome and galling, that the call which invited him to England was welcomed with delight. He was now, as he expressed it, indeed free and in truth a king, and he loudly declared his preference for the hierarchy and constitution of the English Church. On this hierarchy the crown itself rested; and this conviction was embodied in the phrase, "No bishop, no king."

Theology of
James I.

In fact, James's notions of kingly authority were in some important points unlike those of his Tudor predecessors. It was not that they were less despotic or set less store by their prerogatives. But they were content with the reality of power without formulating theories as to its origin; nor would they have cared to debate the questions involved in the forms of election which had preceded the acknowledgment of their title (pp. 133, 195, 213). James himself was prudent enough to avoid the direct stirring up of such a controversy; but for this forbearance he recompensed himself by setting forth ideas of the divine right of

James's Notions
of Kingly
Authority.

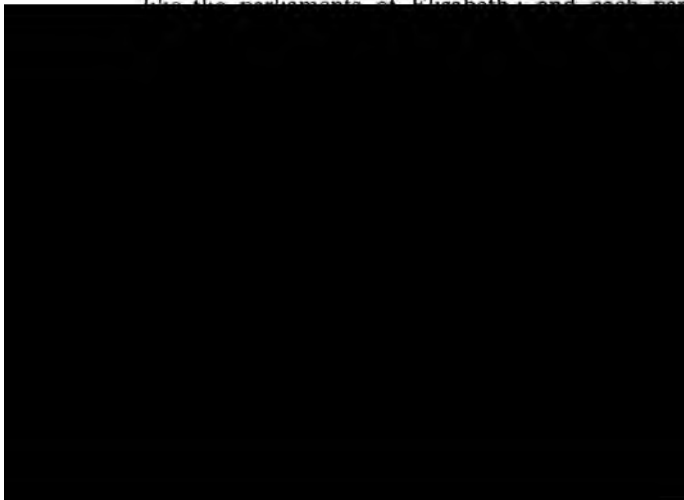
kingship, to which he assigned the authority of mathematical axioms, and which none could deny or dispute without incurring the guilt of treason and impiety.

**The Supposed
Divine Right
of Kings.**

According to his theory, the person of the king was sacred; his will was law, and law could not be the expression of any other will than his own. The measure in which the people might be suffered to take part in the work of government rested wholly with himself. He might ask the aid of the great national council, and it might be imprudent to disregard or to set at naught its advice. But he was in no way bound by its decrees, and he was free to govern without parliaments if he felt that the good of his people, as he construed it, should require him to do so.

**Change in the
Temper of the
People.**

Thus a new colour was given to the relations of king to the people, just at the time when the people were beginning to regard in a different, if not a wholly new, light the relations of the nation to the sovereign. The parliaments of James I. were by no means wholly like the parliaments of Elizabeth and each par-



assured his hearers that the system of Presbytery, adopted in the Scottish kirk, agreed as well with monarchy as God with the devil. If such a system should be set up in England, Jack and Tom and Will and Dick, he said, would meet and at their pleasure censure him and his council, and therefore he warned them that to all such plans his answer must be "*Le roy s'avisera*;" in other words, that the king would be guided solely by his own judgment.

The results of the conference were not very serious. A catechism was drawn up, and an order was given for a new translation of the Bible, which still remains as the Authorized Version; but it became sufficiently clear that the king had a rooted dislike for those who were opposed to the threefold government of the Church by the orders of bishops, priests, and deacons. His mother and himself, he said, had been haunted by Puritan devils from their cradles; and rather than submit to such spirits he would hazard the loss of his crown. He little knew that the great conflict had begun which was to show the absurdity and iniquity of attempts to influence or suppress by force the opinions, belief, and convictions of men.

Results of the
Conference.

Nor, indeed, had Henry VIII. known that when, in order to maintain the theory of his own supremacy, he attempted to coerce the belief of his subjects, he was opening the way for a revolution of which no one could foresee the end. Long before the close of Elizabeth's reign it had ceased to be true that the English Church was simply the English nation in its religious aspect. The polity which she and her ministers strove to support was called into question or rejected by zealots whose intolerance far surpassed her own. She had no intention of being over-ridden or governed by the bishops and clergy of the Church

Puritan Intoler-
ance.

of England ; but theologians who rejected Episcopacy as scarcely less hateful or false than Popery or idolatry were already asserting for the Presbytery a power which would make the sovereign and the State bond slaves. These, in fact, would have nothing to do but to register and carry out the decrees of a religious tribunal ; and these decrees would be the sentences of death on all whom they chose to condemn as heretics. For these heretics repentance to be of no avail. They must die. "If this," said one of these champions of truth, "be bloody extreme, I am content to be so counted with the Holy Ghost."

Penalties for
Recusancy.

Such was the light now shed by the candle which had been lit at the burning of Latimer and Ridley (p. 336). Nor was this the only sign which portended the spread of conflagration. Measures of repression were applied on all sides. The accession of James had awakened in the Roman Catholics of England the hope that they would be no longer harassed

The latter were now beginning to profess their hearty agreement with the new theories of royal power and prerogative set forth by king James. They failed to see, or, at all events, they failed to declare, that he was giving a new and an illegal sense to words which had been in use long before his coming to England. The term "absolute monarchy" had been held to denote one with which no foreign ruler, be he pope or emperor, had a right to interfere; but James was using it to denote a sovereignty which might upset all the laws of the land at will.

This new theory had its counterpart in the doctrine of passive obedience which was diligently preached at Oxford and elsewhere. In no case, it was contended, could subjects be justified in using force against their princes; and the attempt to determine what a king could or could not do was declared to be not less horrible than the atheism and blasphemy which should dispute what God might do.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

THE REIGN OF JAMES I. (*continued*).

Attempt to Deal with the Religious Revolution.

THE king's theory of royal power was, we must remember, accompanied or completed by another theory which had a peculiar charm for the majority of the English clergy. The divine right of kings was not more certain than the divine right of bishops. The one rested on the other; and all the resources of the royal authority should be used to bring all heretics and separatists under their feet. The king

declared that he would make them conform, or he would harry them out of the land.

change in the
Temper of the
People.

It was not surprising that some who heard these doctrines put forth, should say that they were not likely under such rule to leave to their successors the freedom bequeathed to them by their ancestors. Nor can we wonder that James's first parliament should exhibit a temper markedly different from that of the assemblies which had met under the Tudor sovereign. The circumstances of the case were essentially changed. There was need for greater plainness of speech on the part of the Commons; and it cannot be said that the language which they used left any doubt as to the convictions or their meaning. It was, they insisted, a thorough delusion to suppose that the kings of England have any absolute power in themselves either to alter religion or to make any laws concerning the same, otherwise than, as in temporal causes, by consent of parliament.

The Parliaments
of James I.

But James was now to feel the effects of that power against which the greatest of the Plantagenets had



His son was to reap the whirlwind. He resorted to all kinds of devices for obtaining money without consulting parliament. The plan of benevolences (p. 305) was again employed ; but the result was miserably disappointing. He sold peerages ; but the purchase money only enabled him to postpone for a brief season the dreaded encounter with the national council. Meanwhile, the causes of offence given to the people were daily gaining strength.

At the king's bidding the judges had drawn forth precedents which, as they declared, empowered him to impose customs duties and to levy benevolences on his own sole authority. But, infatuated by his own theories of the rights inherent in kingship, he demanded that the judges should consult his will before they gave judgment in any cases affecting the royal prerogative. All resisted at first this monstrous claim ; but, after being confronted by the king, Sir Edward Coke alone stood firm, and was degraded from his office of Chief Justice (1616).

Degradation of
Sir Edward
Coke.

The grossness of the wrong was heightened by the knowledge that these attempts to extinguish the liberties of Englishmen came from a king whose court could scarcely be described as anything less than a den of iniquity. After the death of Robert Cecil, the son of Elizabeth's minister, Lord Burleigh, James virtually discarded his council, and handed over the reins of government to infamous favourites, whose worst excesses he was vehemently suspected of sharing. The first of these was Robert Carr, who became Viscount Rochester, and, as Earl of Somerset, married the divorced wife of Lord Essex. The marriage was opposed by Sir Thomas Overbury, and Overbury died in the Tower the day before the divorce. The general belief was that Somerset and

The King and
his Favourites.

Lady Essex had poisoned him ; but although they were convicted of the crime, for which their accomplices suffered death, they both received a pardon.

George Villiers
and Francis
Bacon.

The place of Robert Carr was taken by a man perhaps still more infamous in his life and character. George Villiers, the younger son of a Leicestershire knight, had the same personal beauty which had attracted the king to Carr. His rise to high rank and influence was more rapid and more permanent than that of Carr, and the advancement of Villiers to the dukedom of Buckingham was accompanied by the advancement of Bacon to the office of Lord Chancellor. But even the arrogance of Buckingham failed to protect Bacon against charges of systematic corruption as a judge. Bacon confessed his guilt, and besought the king to be commissioned to ascertain the genuineness of his confession to be merciful to a broken reed.

Bacon's Double
Life.

So ended the political career of a man who may truthfully be said to have lived a double life, the one being the life of a man devoted to the search of truth for truth's sake, taking in almost at a glance the whole

trouble came (p. 352), sought to mediate for his friend with the queen; but when it seemed likely that by persisting in his advocacy he might bring himself into peril, he turned round and appeared at the bar as counsel for the crown. After the execution of Essex, he did his best to blacken the character of his generous friend. By way of excuse (and it was his only excuse), he pleaded that he had written by command. We need not quarrel with the verdict which he thus passes on himself.

Three years before the degradation of Bacon the axe had fallen on the neck of Sir Walter Raleigh (1618). This brilliant courtier and bold adventurer had at the beginning of James's reign been condemned for his alleged share in an obscure plot against the king. The evidence was so ludicrously inadequate that James thought it more convenient to keep him safely under ward. Raleigh spent more than twelve years in the Tower, writing his "History of the World." He was then released on the understanding that he was to sail to Guiana, and there discover a gold mine on the banks of the Orinoco. James at the same time informed the Spanish king, to whom Guiana belonged, of the proposed expedition. Raleigh's plans were accordingly frustrated, and blood was shed in the conflict. The Spanish ambassador complained to the English king, and James with shameful readiness sent Raleigh to the block, not after a new trial and a new condemnation, but on the sentence passed upon him fifteen years before.

Career of
Walter
Raleigh.

So was the victim immolated on the altar of the Spanish king, by whose wealth James hoped that he and his son Charles might be benefited. His heart was set on a marriage between the prince and the infanta; but the result of the scheme was only dis-

James and the
Spanish Mar-
riage.

appointment and disaster. Charles, with his friend Villiers, who was now ~~raised from the~~ marquisate ~~the dukedom~~ of Buckingham, spent some time in Spain from which they brought back little more than increased skill in the arts of dissimulation and falsehood.

The Parliament
of 1624.

The obstacles to the carrying out of this plan compelled James once more to face a parliament (1624) and the parliament declared that the negotiations for the Spanish marriage could not be continued without honour. He addressed the assembly, indeed, in a humbler or more guarded language. Two years had passed since he dissolved the previous parliament in high indignation at the presumption which entered the Journals of the Commons the statement that "the liberties and franchises of parliament are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England; that arduous and urgent affairs concerning the king, the state, and the defence of the realm, are proper subjects of counsel and debate in parliament; and that in the handling of these businesses every member hath and ought to be

recovering the Palatinate from the troops which had occupied it by help of subsidies from the Spanish king. The Palatinate of the Rhine was the dominion of the Elector Frederick V., who had married James's daughter Elizabeth;¹ and the seizure of the territory by the forces of the Catholic princes was one of the earliest incidents in the long and frightful drama of the Thirty Years' War.

The English were ready to make any sacrifices for its recovery, and they saw that the most effectual means for recovering it would be a war with Spain. From this war James shrank as fatal to the proposed marriage between his son and the infanta. On the other hand, freedom of worship for the Roman Catholics of England was a stipulation on which the Spanish king insisted as indispensable, if the infanta were to share the English throne; and in the present temper of the English people such concessions were becoming year by year less possible.

**Demands of the
Spanish King.**

The failure of the Spanish scheme was followed by a proposal for the union of prince Charles with Henrietta Maria, the sister of the French king, Louis XIII.; and the same demand for freedom of worship which had been made by the Spanish court was now made by the French. It was clear that the bargain could not be ratified openly. The English king, therefore, entered into a secret engagement, by which his Roman Catholic subjects were to have greater freedom than had been assured to them even by the conditions of the Spanish match. Another step was thus taken along the fatal road which led to rooted suspicion of the sovereign on the part of his subjects, and to judgments harsher than the circumstances of the case often warranted.

**Compact with
the French
King.**

¹ See Genealogy VII.

Death of James
I.

But before the marriage could be celebrated, James fell ill and died (March 27, 1625).

CHAPTER LXXV.

THE REIGN OF CHARLES I.

The Attempt to rule according to the Theory of the Divine Right of Kings.

Essential Un-
truthfulness
of Charles I.

HIS son Charles was now king, and he showed himself an apt disciple in his father's school. Free from James's abominable vices, Charles shrank from the profligate licence which had disgraced his father's court ; but he was even more thoroughly possessed by the belief in those theories of regal power which already portended dire catastrophe in the future. His father's parliaments had shown with tolerable clearness that they would have nothing to say to such theories, and it was obviously impossible for any English

of his subjects. The Commons began by voting him the customs duties for one year only, instead of for life, and when, without granting him an adequate subsidy, they insisted on examining into grievances, the king dissolved parliament, a few weeks only after it had met (1625).

Within six months he found himself compelled, ^{H1} from lack of means for carrying on the government, to call together a second parliament; and this assembly at once impeached the Duke of Buckingham. To avert the danger which threatened his father's minion and his own friend, Charles dissolved this parliament also, and allowed Buckingham to engage a fleet and army in the disastrous siege of Rochelle. At the same time he carried on his own war against the laws and constitution of England. He demanded of the judges that no man arrested by his orders should be admitted to bail; and the judges subjected prisoners so arrested to illegal imprisonment, although they shrank from laying down the general principle for which the king was contending.

Within three years after his accession, or, as earlier ^{H1} kings (pp. 133, 213) might have called it, his election, Charles informed his third parliament that, if they failed to do their duty, he must use those other means which God had put into his hands to save that of which the follies of some particular men might hazard the loss. This, he said, was not to be taken as threatening. He scorned to threaten any but his equals. It was simply a warning from him who, both out of nature and duty, had most care for their safety and welfare.

The parliament heard his speech with respect, and ^{De} voted a large subsidy, without at once passing the vote into a law. Charles received the news with joy;


but the feeling that he might now really secure kingly power was damped by their demanding of him a declaration that the Great Charter (p. 216) all liberties of Englishmen were in full force, as times past.

**Petition of
Right.**

This demand was embodied in the famous Petition of Right. Charles at first tried to avoid signing it assuring them that his word was as trustworthy as bond; and when the Commons demurred to claim of sovereign power as inherent in the king forbade them from meddling for the future with affairs of State.

**Prorogation of
the Third Par-
liament.**

The Commons had told James I. that it was their duty and their right to meddle in all such affairs (p. 362). They now refused to grant money until the Petition of Right should have the royal assent. was given in due form. But a fresh declaration from the Commons, that no taxes whatever should be levied except by law, so angered the king that he prorogued the assembly.



Commons, to have only the first evasive form attached to it; and the king's printer owned to having received the order so to alter the text. When, therefore, Charles insisted again that the tonnage and poundage duties should be granted to him for life, the Commons flatly refused; and Charles dissolved this assembly also, declaring that he should consider it presumption in any one to prescribe to him any time for again summoning the national council.

He had, in fact, made up his mind to rule without parliaments, thinking that, if need should so be, he might return to government by means of parliament. But he was mistaken in supposing that such alternations could be carried out by the will of one man, and he had forgotten that by determinately resisting his people a king might open between himself and his subjects a gulf not to be recrossed. But for the time Charles seemed to be the gainer. The chief defenders of the national liberties in parliament were imprisoned, and Sir John Eliot remained in the Tower till his death. Peace with France and Spain freed the king from the necessity of making heavy demands on the people, and the prosperity of the country steadily increased.

But this outward wealth rested on no sure foundation. Dissensions broke out round the king himself. The queen and her associates had little liking for the wisest and the most able of the king's counsellors. She had her plans and aims, and they had theirs. In Wentworth the king had an adviser who, if he had been left to himself, might have succeeded in his purpose of "vindicating the monarchy for ever from the conditions and restraints of subjects." When in the House of Commons he had expressed his resolution of establishing an order of quite another sort, he prayed that if he failed in this trust he "might be set

as a beacon on a hill for all men else to wonder at." He did so fail, and he was so set up.

Dislike of the
Queen for
Strafford and
Laud.

But Henrietta Maria and her partisans were utterly incapable of appreciating the depth of purpose which expressed itself in Strafford's watchword of "Thorough," which gives significance to his correspondence with his friend Laud. They had no care for the statesmanship by which Strafford, as the king's lieutenant, had converted the kingdom of Ireland into a source of wealth for the crown, instead of a constant drain on its resources. Nor had she or they any sympathy with Laud in the ecclesiastical reformation or restoration for the sake of which he was ready to inflict tortures, or, if need be, to undergo them.

General Con-
dition of the
Kingdom.

For both Strafford and Laud the work which they had taken in hand was a very serious business. Charles agreed entirely with both; but he failed to protect them from the constant hindrances and annoyances with which the queen's party hampered their action. These were bent on enjoyment, while they were anxious for a rigid economy; and for this economy there was daily a growing and more pressing need. The king had no war on hand; but still his treasury was empty. His ships were without rigging, his seamen were unpaid; and the fleets of English merchantmen were constantly plundered by corsairs from Barbary, who swooped down on the English coast, plundered villages, and carried multitudes into slavery.

The King and
his Counsellors.

Against these and other dangers Strafford had striven to provide safeguards in concert with the Irish parliament; but, listening to the entreaties of the queen, Charles forbade him to summon the parliament again, and so the work which might have been done was in every direction thwarted or nullified.

Meanwhile, the king watched with satisfaction the growth of the great fabric of despotism raised by his lawyers and his counsellors.

The latter maintained or extended all the privileges against which the parliaments of his father and of the Tudor sovereigns had protested; the former ferreted out the records of old and long-forgotten abuses, and declared them to be precedents which the king might safely follow. His commissioners went through the country, inflicting enormous fines for offences with which they dealt both as accusers and as judges. Old monopolies were revived, and a vast number of new ones were added to the list. Encroachments on the royal forests were punished by fines of £20,000, and even of larger sums. Men who feared the ruin which might thus come upon them hastened to bribe the judges, who were not more incorruptible than Francis Bacon (p. 360); and money seldom failed to win permission for the continuance of abuses for the repression of which the penalty was professedly inflicted.

Revival of Old Abuses.

Such a work could not be carried on without well-organized support; and this support the king found in the clergy of the Church of England. Holding that their power, like that of the king, came to them of divine right, they now proclaimed sedulously the doctrines of absolute submission, and condemned even a passive resistance to the will and the fiat of the sovereign. Charles, like his father, found it convenient to forget the language addressed to the bishops by queen Elizabeth, when she declared that as she had made them, so she could, if she pleased, unfrock them.

Charles I. and the Clergy of the Church of England.

Laud, now raised to the see of Canterbury, acted as the head of a great army which must be drilled into habits of absolute obedience. Whether men

System of Arch bishop Laud.

could avoid thinking or not, was a question with which he did not concern himself. His task was to insure complete conformity, and to achieve this end he employed the argument of irresistible force, which dealt out to all who resisted him the penalties of degradation, imprisonment, and torture.

His Aims and
Motives.

How far he may have intended to carry the exaltation of his order it is perhaps impossible to say. He assuredly aimed at recovering for the clergy the political power which they had once exercised; and when by his influence Juxon, bishop of London, was appointed high treasurer, he exclaimed in his delight, "Let the Church now subsist and maintain her own power. All is accomplished for her. I can do no more."

Emigration of
Puritans to
Holland and
America.

The yoke thus imposed was for many too heavy to be borne. Some had already left the country to find a place of refuge in Holland, where they learnt to hate still more bitterly the whole system under which they had been sufferers. From Holland not a few made their way to newly-founded colonies in America. Ship after ship conveyed companies of emigrants, who carried with them from England vast sums of money. The king's government took alarm at a drain of wealth which was becoming serious; and when the order forbidding the departure of such ships was issued, eight vessels were ready to sail from the Thames. On one of those were Pym, who afterwards conducted the impeachment of Strafford; Hampden, who lived to fight the battle of ship-money; and Cromwell, who lived to sign the king's death-warrant, and to take his place.

Outward Forms
of Puritanism.

But neither the despotism of Charles, nor the tyranny of Laud, availed to prevent or even to check the growth of a spirit and temper absolutely opposed

to their pretensions. The leaven of puritanism was fast spreading through the country, and was showing itself in marked distinctions of dress, manner, and speech. The adoption of this sombre garb and rigidity of demeanour insured a widespread popularity for the wearers, in whose ranks might be found, along with men of profound sincerity, not a few hypocrites and knaves.

Furious at this opposition, Laud and the bishops resolved to employ the terrors of the Star Chamber in the work of repression. Prynne, a barrister; Burton, a clergyman; and Bastwick, a physician, were summoned before their bar, and sentenced to stand in the pillory, to lose their ears, to pay a fine of £5000, and to be imprisoned for life. The serene courage with which they underwent these barbarous punishments kindled afresh the enthusiasm of the people; and the fire thus lit was fed by the conduct of John Hampden in the matter of ship-money (1637).

From the emigrant ship Hampden had returned to his estate in Buckinghamshire. The magistrates charged with the levying of this impost demanded of him only the small sum of twenty shillings. They had no wish to provoke a contest, and they hoped that a sum so trifling would disarm his opposition. But Hampden quietly refused to pay, and his counsel pleaded his cause with the same quietness and prudence before the bar of the judges, of whom four voted in his favour, while six gave judgment against him (1637).

This success, such as it was, on the king's side, was followed speedily by grave disaster in Scotland. Charles had done his utmost to re-establish Episcopacy in that country. The time was now come, he thought, for substituting, in place of the Common Order drawn

Condemnation
of Prynne
Burton, and
Bastwick.
1634.

Trial of Hamp-
den for re-
fusing to pay
ship-money.
1637.

Re-establish-
ment of Epis-
copacy in Scot-
land.

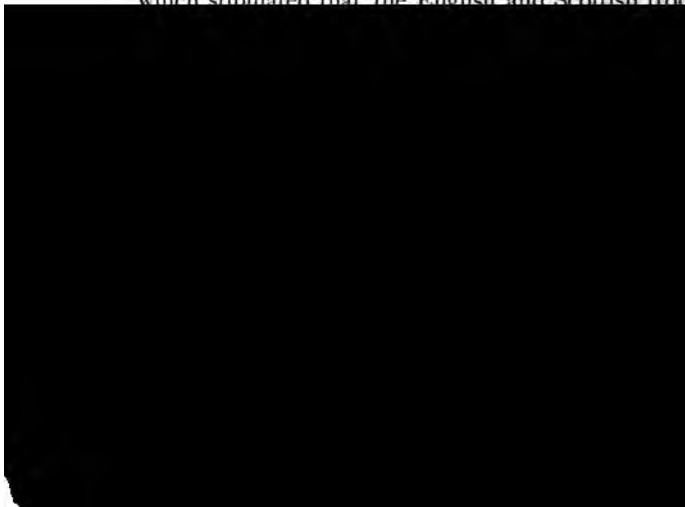
up by John Knox on the Genevan model, a Liturgy in close agreement with that of the Church of England. The attempt to introduce this Liturgy stirred popular feeling to its inmost depths. A furious tumult cut short the new service in the Cathedral of Edinburgh; and the name of Jenny Geddes has been handed down as that of a woman who hurled a stone at the head of the dean who was officiating.

**The Solemn
League and
Covenant,
1637.**

The king insisted again on obedience; but his proclamation only led to the drawing up of the Solemn League and Covenant, by which the Scottish nation swore to defend its religion, its laws, and its liberties. Not content with this, they appealed to the English parliament, and the English parliament hastened to express its sympathy with their sufferings and their wrongs (1637).

**Treaty of Ber-
wick. June
18, 1639.**

Resolved on suppressing this resistance by force, the king advanced so far as York; but the aversion even of his officers and soldiers to such a war led him to consent to a treaty made at Berwick, June 18, 1639, which stipulated that the English and Scottish troops



his word was no longer trusted ; and they were not content with any mere pledges that he would no longer levy ship-money. The impost must be declared illegal.

Charles was again brought face to face with the old dilemma, and he did again what he had done thrice already. Within three weeks from the day on which they had met, he dissolved the assembly, and before many hours had passed bitterly regretted his act. The next day he wished to recall the dissolution ; but he was told that this was impracticable, and he betook himself once more to the exercise of an irresponsible despotism.

**Dissolution of
the Parli-
ment.**

Some acts of war took place in the north ; but petitions from many counties prayed the king to make peace with Scotland. Strafford declared that they who brought the petitions ought to be shot. "Are you sure of your soldiers, when you have pronounced your sentence?" was the question, to which Strafford could make no reply. His discouragement was fully shared by the king ; and once more he felt that he must face the representatives of his subjects.

**State of Publ-
Feeling.**

Charles's fifth parliament met on Nov. 3, 1640. It was to be his last. From the contrast with the preceding "Short" parliament, it became known afterwards as the "Long ;" and it lasted on for years after the body of the king had been laid in the grave. Almost from the moment of its meeting Charles must have felt that he had opened the flood-gates of revolution.

**Meeting of th
Fifth or Lon
Parliament.
1640.**

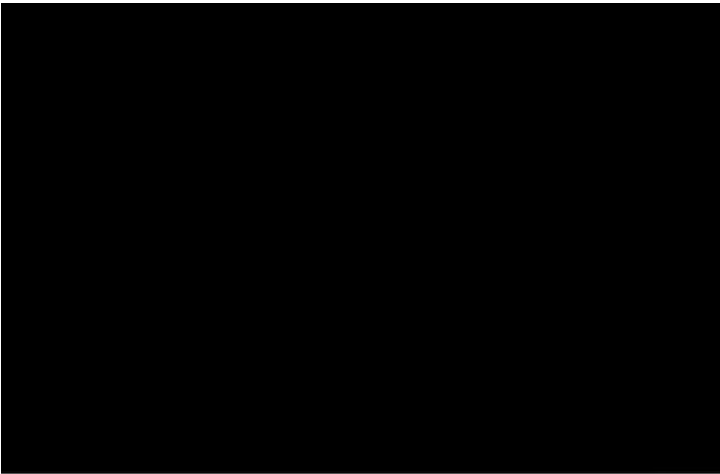
The condition and aspect of things were, indeed, at once changed. Men felt and said that nothing less than root and branch work would meet the necessities of the case. The Commons approved the vast number of petitions poured in upon them from all

**Measures for
the Suppres-
sion of Abuse**

parts of the country. Committees of the House were charged to inquire into all abuses ; and all agents of the king who had taken part in any condemned measures were marked as "delinquents."

peachment of
Strafford.

Strafford saw the storm which was about to burst. He desired to be excused from attendance in parliament. The king assured him that parliament should not touch one hair of his head. Sorely against his will Strafford came ; but he came with the purpose of accusing those members whom he regarded as having aided and abetted in the recent Scottish invasion. Before he could take his place in the House of Lords, the Commons at their bar impeached him of high treason. A like charge was brought against Archbishop Laud. The House went on steadily in its task. By way of expressing their gratitude for the brotherly aid of the Scots, they voted them a sum of £300,000 ; and they set free Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick, declaring their condemnation illegal. A bill provided for the summoning of parliaments once at least in every three years, and other votes at the same time demanded the abolition of the Star



The latter were fanatics, or fast becoming such ; the former were, on the whole, discreet and moderate. The king was advised to offer to the chiefs of these a place in his Council. The offer was not without its attractions ; but Charles demanded as his recompense the liberation of Strafford and the maintenance of the existing government in the Church.

The suspicion had now got abroad that the king was engaged in plots which had for their object the terrorizing of parliament by a military force. One of the conspirators, it is said, revealed the whole plan, and the discovery settled the fate of Strafford. His trial was begun. For seventeen days he argued the charges brought against him ; and it became evident, not only that there was no direct proof of the specific crime of treason, but that the lords would refuse to condemn him as judges on the score of law. His opponents, however, were resolved that he should not escape them. As the trial went on, the Commons were busied in passing through its several stages a bill of attainder, and before the trial could be brought to an end, the bill of attainder had passed the Lower House.

Trial of Strafford.

Overwhelmed with grief, Charles assured Strafford that he should suffer neither in life, fortune, nor honour. Plan after plan was devised for his escape, but all failed ; and, to rouse popular passions against Strafford, Prynne denounced the recent plot by which, as he said, an army was to be brought up for the intimidation of parliament. Wild fears were excited on all sides ; and the Commons took advantage of them to declare that the present parliament should not be dissolved without its own consent.

General Excitement.

The lords now wished to amend the bill against Strafford ; but their opposition was overcome, and the

The Bill of Attainder against Strafford.

judges now declared that Strafford's acts, taken together, involved the guilt of treason. The king's signature alone was wanting. Strafford wrote Charles, asking him to give it. To bring about happy concord between him and his subjects he was ready to die ; and to a willing man, he said, there was no injury done. By these words Charles persuaded himself to be persuaded. On hearing that the letter was signed, Strafford said only, "Put not your trust in princes, for there is no help in them."

Execution of
Strafford.
May 12, 1641.

On the next day the sentence was carried out. As he passed, Laud was ready at his prison window. Strafford knelt, and Laud stretched his arms to bless him, but fell back senseless. At the scaffold he said that he had desired for this kingdom every earthly prosperity. "While I lived, this was my constant endeavour ; dying, it is my only wish." There is no reason to doubt that in saying this he spoke the truth. But his idea of national prosperity was not that of the English people ; and although the lies of Charles I. were legion, even Charles was none the

the unlooked-for tidings of a hideous massacre of the English in Ireland by the Irish Catholics (1641). The horrors of the slaughter were not exaggerated; but the English parliament forgot that while they were bent on securing freedom for themselves at home, they had steadily withheld it from the people of Ireland.

Charles was still in Scotland when this news came. He wrote to the Commons to say that he had taken certain measures to put down the rebellion, but that he left all further action in their hands. This attempt to shift responsibility from himself to them succeeded only in hastening the drawing up of the Grand Remonstrance, which, fiercely denouncing the iniquities of the king's government, appealed to the people against the sovereign. It was carried by only a small majority after long and vehement debate. "If it had been rejected," said Cromwell to Lord Falkland, "I would to-morrow have sold all I have, and never seen England more."

**The Grand Remonstrance.
1641.**

The length to which political reforms were being carried was now causing some revulsion of feeling amongst the more moderate members of parliament. The king resolved to avail himself of this change, and took into his counsels the three men who stood at their head. These were Edward Hyde (afterwards the historian of the revolution, which he called the Great Rebellion); Lord Falkland, who fell on the field of Newbury; and Sir John Colepepper.

Overtures of the King to Hyde, Falkland, and Colepepper.

But the dislike for the more extravagant enthusiasts was not felt only within the walls of Parliament. Large numbers of the country gentlemen were content, and more than content, with what had been already done, and, hurrying up to London, loudly professed their devotion to the king and their hatred

Cavaliers and Roundheads.


of the Puritans, whom they, as Cavaliers, stigmatized by the name of Roundheads, from their close cropped hair. They thronged the approaches to Whitehall, and, in real or affected fear, the Commons applied for a guard, which was refused by the king on the ground that they had a better assurance of safety in his plighted word (Jan. 3, 1642).

**The King and
the Five Mem-
bers.**

But on this same day Charles sent the Attorney General to charge with treason, before the bar of the House of Lords, Lord Kimbolton and five members of the House of Commons, Hampden, Pym, Holles, Strode, Haslerig. In the latter House a serjeant at arms appeared to demand the surrender of the members into his custody. The House informed the king that such a message could be complied with only after careful consideration, and renewed their demand for a guard. On the next day, while the House was sitting, an officer entered and said that the king was approaching with an escort of three or four hundred armed men. The five members withdrew.

**Attempt to Ar-
rest the Five
Members.**

Leaving his bodyguard at the door, Charles entered the House with only his nephew, the Count Palatine of



queen had raised the highest hopes. Charles had left Whitehall, telling his wife that he would come back in an hour master of his kingdom. The failure was complete ; but Charles still thought that by going the next day to the city he might obtain the surrender of the members from the Common Council.

The result of his visit was utterly disheartening. The Commons adjourned their sittings for a few days ; and when they again met the king learnt that the five members were to be brought back in triumph to Westminster. This was too much for Charles's pride. His wife urged him to leave London. The cavaliers gave the same advice ; and Charles left Whitehall (Jan. 10, 1642), never to see it again until he entered it on the morning of his execution.

Departure of
the King from
Whitehall.
Jan. 10, 1642.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

THE REIGN OF CHARLES I. (*continued*).

The War for the Royal Power.

FROM Hampton Court Charles went to Windsor. His chief object was to gain time. It was arranged that the queen should go to Holland to raise men and money in his cause ; but, while she made ready for her journey, the king invited the parliament to draw up a complete statement of all grievances in a single document, the acceptance of which would end all debate between them at once. The Commons insisted that the command of the Tower, of the royal fortresses, and of the militia, should be placed in the hands of men named and approved by parliament. Charles refused the demand, which was again insisted

Negotiations
with the Com-
mons. 1642.

on by both Houses, the bill for the exclusion of the bishops from parliament being passed at the same time.

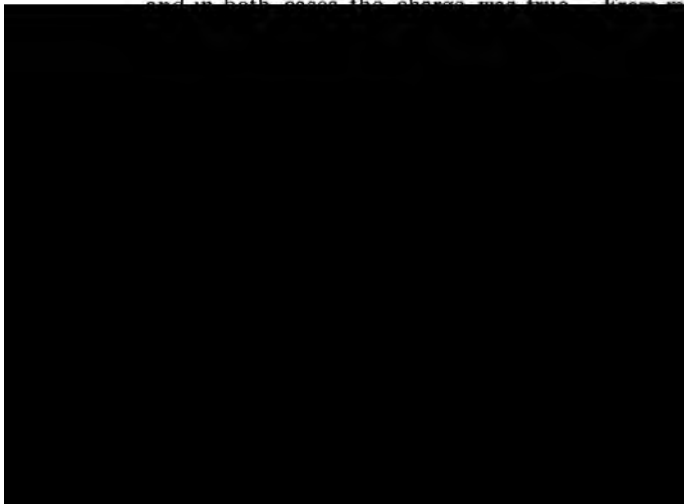
The Commissioners at Newmarket.

Still the negotiations went on. The parliamentary commissioners who met him at Newmarket, after having left the queen at Dover, asked whether the militia might not be granted for a time. "No," was the answer, "not for an hour. You have asked of me in this which was never asked of a king." To Ireland, he told them that he would suppress the rebellion there, if he were trusted with the task, adding that, though he was a beggar himself, he could find money for that. These words roused once more the worst suspicions. It was Charles's lot to walk these by almost everything that he said.

Charges of illegality.

Of reconciliation there was little hope indeed. Neither side perhaps had any; but on both sides the negotiations served as an appeal to the people. The king and the parliament alike charged each other with illegality as well as with unwarranted change.

and in both cases the charge was true. From the



should remain only the picture or sign of a king. A final appeal to good sense and moderation made by Sir Benjamin Rudyard within the walls of parliament was rejected not less summarily.

The House voted war, and the setting up of the royal standard at Nottingham, Aug. 23, 1642, was proof that the conflict had begun. In this great struggle the main strength of the parliament lay to the east of a line drawn from the Isle of Wight to Scarborough. Elsewhere the king's supporters had the ascendancy. But the scenes in this terrible drama were constantly shifting; and thorough consistency, it is clear, could not be looked for on either side.

The first engagement between the two armies took place at the foot of the rising ground known as Edgehill, near Keynton, in Warwickshire. Lord Essex, the parliamentary commander, was defeated; and the king established his headquarters and his court at Oxford. A little later on, his power was strengthened by the men, money, and arms which the queen had raised in Holland, and with which she safely reached York.

But the war was producing new forces and leading to new issues, of which no one had thus far dreamed. Seeing the inferiority of the parliamentary troops to those of the king, Oliver Cromwell raised a body of about a thousand horsemen, whom he placed under the strictest discipline, and who were afterwards known as his Ironsides. "I will not," he said, "make you believe, as my commission has it, that you are to fight for the king and parliament. If the king were before me, I would as soon shoot him as another. If you are not ready to do the same, go and serve elsewhere."

Death of Hampden. 1643.

The king's cause seemed to be still further aided by the death of Hampden, who was mortally wounded in a cavalry skirmish, June 16, 1643, on Chalgrove Common, not far from his own house ; and, in truth, disasters seemed to come thick and fast on the adherents of the parliament. Battle after battle was lost ; and Bristol, then the second city in the kingdom, fell at the first assault into the hands of the royalists, who also won a brilliant victory at Roundway Down in Wiltshire. Carried away by this success, the king was so ill-advised as to declare the persons assembled at Westminster to be no parliament, and that, for the future, he would not give them the name. The only effect of this defiance was the sending of commissioners from the Commons with an invitation to the Scots to come to the aid of the Protestants of England.

Failure of the Negotiations for Peace.

But the king soon adopted a milder tone. The House of Lords insisted on negotiations for peace, and the Commons decided by ninety-four to sixty-four that their message should be considered. In the division which followed, eighty-one voted in its favour, and seventy-nine against it. The mob outside became furious. The opponents of peace within the House declared that the votes had been wrongly counted, and the tellers on their side gave their numbers on a second division as eighty-eight, thus defeating the eighty-one who still voted against them.

Raising of the Siege of Gloucester.

The war party had won a victory ; but the means by which it had been gained led many to say that the parliament had been guilty of almost all the wrongs which had been laid to the charge of the king. Meanwhile the latter seemed to be carrying everything before him. Gloucester alone adhered to the cause of parliament in the west ; and this city was

closely beleaguered by the royal army. But here the tide of Charles's success was arrested. Lord Essex, the parliamentary general, who was the son of Elizabeth's favourite, and whose divorced wife had married the infamous Robert Carr (p. 359), made his way steadily for the relief of the city, beating back the cavalry sent against him by prince Rupert, son of Charles's sister Elizabeth, the wife of Frederick V., king of Bohemia (p. 363). When he reached Prestbury, a few miles from Gloucester, Essex saw the camp of the besiegers in flames, and knew that the siege was raised.

Hastening back to London, Essex encountered the royal army again at Newbury. The battle, fiercely contested, was indecisive ; and the result was dispiriting to the royalists, who lost many of the most illustrious in their ranks. Among these was Lord Falkland. As Secretary of State, he was not called upon to take part in the fight ; but he would not be kept away. "I am weary of the times," he said ; "I foresee much misery to my country, but I believe that I shall be out of it before night." He was one of the first to fall. The loss to the king's cause was almost irreparable ; but, seemingly, it was not greatly felt by Charles himself.

In London the civil war was provoking religious dissension. The Presbyterians had long proclaimed their purpose of reducing the Church of England to a republican constitution, to which they intended to compel every one to submit. The Independents, who held that every congregation had a right to regulate its own affairs without let or hindrance from others, asked why a national church should exist at all, and by what authority men were to be brought under any uniform order which had merely the like-

Battle of Newbury. Death of Falkland. Sept. 20, 1643.

The Presbyterians and the Independents.

ness without the reality of unity. For the first time the doctrine of toleration (pp. 286, 321, 336) received a clear expression ; but it may be doubted whether these sectaries fully understood the principle to which they were committing themselves. It is certain that for maintaining it they were set down as fanatics by fools alike by Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Papists.

Questions of Political and Ecclesiastical Government.

But they could scarcely stop short here. In the Church the Presbyterians would put up neither with royalty nor with aristocracy. The kingship of the Pope, the supremacy of bishops in matters of religion, were hateful in their eyes. Why, then, should they submit to have royalty and aristocracy in the State? In the present war they were appealing to the sovereignty of the people. Why, asked the Independents, should this appeal be made only in times of desperate need? Why should it not always be the basis of government and legislation? The nation had shaken off the yoke of the Pope ; but the Presbyterians were not less tyrannical than the Episcopalian clergy.

But at the same time it became known that he was preparing to introduce into Scotland an army of Irishmen, who were to co-operate with the Earl of Montrose as he came down with his Highlanders to carry fire and sword over the Lowlands.

Here, then, was more proof of the king's falsehood or treachery. It was on this fatal rock that he made shipwreck of all his fortunes. It seemed impossible for him to throw off the conviction that he was free to lie for the purpose of promoting what he called the good of his people; and, holding himself to be under constraint, he regarded his most solemn promises as mere veils for hiding his real mind. We may feel for him, and we can scarcely help feeling a profound pity; but it is the pity which mourns a perversion of intellect so great as to stifle remorse for crime, and to justify the most cold-blooded cruelty.

Charges of
Treachery
against the
King.

The tidings of this Irish plot, brought from Scotland, roused deep indignation in London. It was resolved that Essex should march to besiege Oxford. The news of his approach determined the departure of the queen, who now left her husband never to see him again; and the investment of the city filled Charles himself with grave fears of the issue. Suddenly it became known that he had escaped from Oxford (1644); but, on finding that the forces of the parliament were divided, and that he could deal with the two portions separately, he made his way back to Oxford, and, placing himself at the head of his troops, won at Cropredy Bridge a victory which seemed an earnest of greater success.

Battle of Crop-
redy Bridge.
1644.

The bright gleam of hope soon vanished. The fiery rashness of prince Rupert turned into hopeless ruin the opportunity for what might have been a still more decisive victory at Marston Moor in Yorkshire.

Battle of Mar-
ston Moor.
July 2, 1644.

It was not merely that his impetuosity carried him here, as elsewhere, into danger; but he had to deal now with Cromwell and his Ironsides. The Royalist army was destroyed. Rupert retreated towards Chester, and York was surrendered to the forces of the parliament.

Cromwell and
the Army.

Cromwell had made another great leap towards power, and he expressed his mind with significant clearness to the Earl of Manchester, who had contributed largely to the brilliant success of Marston Moor. "Be wholly one of us," he said; "talk no more about peace, or of keeping on terms with the lords. What have we to do with peace, or with the lords? Nothing will go right till you call yourself plain Mr. Montague. If you bind yourself to honest folk, you will soon be at the head of an army that will give laws to king and parliament too." Cromwell's prediction was fulfilled. The military despotism, of which he drew a picture, became a little while later a stern reality.

Victories of
Montrose in
Scotland.
1644.

But fortune seemed again to favour the king. He pressed Essex hard in the west, and from Scotland came the tidings of brilliant victories won at Tippermuir and Dee Bridge by Montrose. Charles resolved to march on London; but his progress was arrested by the second battle fought on the field of Newbury, and he retreated to Oxford for the winter. The prospect for the parliament was not encouraging; but alike from failure and from success Cromwell knew how to draw his own profit. He laid all the blame of recent disasters upon Lord Manchester, who in his turn charged Cromwell with insubordination and treachery. Scotch commissioners came to act in concert with the English Presbyterians, and to denounce him as an incendiary and the enemy of his country.

Undismayed by these attacks, Cromwell availed himself of the proposal for sending commissioners to treat with the king at Uxbridge, as an opportunity for insisting that no members of parliament should hold commands in the army. This was clearly a proposition for forming an army which should be independent of parliament. The plan was adopted, and set forth in the Self-denying Ordinance (passed April 3, 1645). As a member of the House, Cromwell, like all other members, had to resign his command; but his victories had been far too important, and the danger that his Ironsides might refuse to obey any other leader was so great, that no resistance was made to the renewal of his commission. His command was renewed again and again throughout the war, and Cromwell, retaining his power within the House, was beyond its walls master of a force which in the end parliament found itself unable to withstand.

The Presbyterians had resisted the Self-denying Ordinance; but doing so, they felt it needful to show that they were not acting as partisans of the Royalists. Archbishop Laud was therefore brought before the bar of the House of Lords. A bill of attainder could not be carried without the consent of the king; legal proof of treason was wanting, and a simple ordinance of parliament announced his condemnation. A week before his execution, the English Liturgy was abolished, and a book entitled "Directions for Public Worship" brought in in its place (1645).

The conferences at Uxbridge came to nothing. At first Charles expressed his readiness to assent to the demands made upon him. He withdrew his assent, because Montrose, having won another great victory at Inverlochy (Feb. 2, 1645), wrote to warn him that his enemies would, if they could, leave him

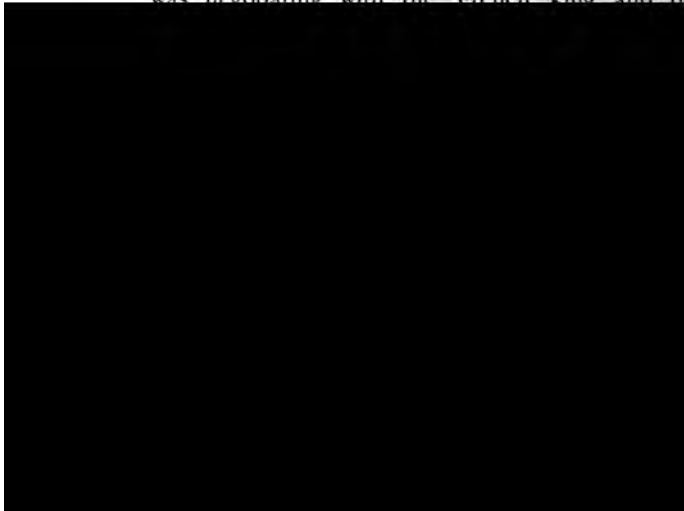
only a king of straw; and another act of deception added to a list of royal falsehoods already formidable.

**Battle of Nase-
by. June 14,
1645.**

Meanwhile Cromwell, at the head of his Ironsides, had thrice defeated the Royalists, and at the tide of Charles had cried out, "Who will bring me Cromwell, dead or alive?" But the king was in a way discouraged. He wrote to assure the queen that his affairs had never been in so good a position, when he fell back towards Leicester on hearing of the approach of the parliamentary army. On the next day (June 14), his hopes were dispelled by the fatal defeat of Naseby. Rupert again threw away all chance of victory by his mad impetuosity. Charles himself fought with the energy of despair; but, while he besought his immediate followers to make one charge more and recover the day, he was hurried from the field, leaving his cabinet papers in the hands of the enemy.

**Secret Negotia-
tions of the
King.**

These papers were read in the House of Commons on July 3. From them it became plain that Charles was negotiating with the French king and of



Montrose, who had once more swept away the covenanting army at Kilsyth (Aug. 15, 1645). But the cup of bitterness was again to be presented to Charles's lips. The tidings that Rupert had surrendered Bristol were followed by the appalling news that the forces of Montrose had in great part deserted him, that the remnant had been cut to pieces at Philiphaugh, and that Montrose himself was a fugitive in the Highlands.

Charles hastened to Newark; from Newark he hurried to Oxford (Nov. 6, 1645), and proposed to treat with the parliament. He offered to appear himself at Westminster for this purpose. By way of answer they told him that they had discovered a new plot in which he was seeking to work their ruin; that he had been making an alliance with the Irish, through the instrumentality of Lord Glamorgan, the Marquis of Worcester's eldest son; that Glamorgan was to land with 10,000 Irish at Chester; and that the recompense for this help was to be the repeal of all penal laws against the Catholics and the complete establishment of popery in Ireland.

It was all true, and less than what was true. Through Glamorgan Charles had been in correspondence with the Pope's Nuncio and with the Pope himself, and he had given a pledge that he would grant the Irish whatever it might be necessary to concede to them, without regard to the supposed or alleged illegality of such concessions. In vain Charles disowned Glamorgan, who had chivalrously undertaken to bear all the blame himself. His protestations and denials were treated with contempt, and he was again left to the arbitrament of war. But the means for war were lacking, and Charles found himself driven to trust in his Scottish subjects. On the 5th

Compact of
Charles with
the Irish.
1645.

Surrender of
the King to
the Scots.
1646.


of May 1646, he entered the headquarters of the Scottish army at Kelham.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

THE REIGN OF CHARLES I. (*continued*).

Usurpation and Tyranny of the Army.

Policy of the King. 1646. CHARLES still clung to his fatal methods of deception. Before setting out on his northern journey, he wrote to Lord Digby that he did not despair of inducing the Presbyterians or Independents to join him in exterminating the one the other; "and then," he added, "I shall be king again." Which side might do this, and what men he might have to root out, was a matter of perfect indifference to one for whom the only object aimed at was the recovery of his own power. To Glamorgan he wrote to say that he might engage his kingdom as a security for a



Covenanters had at first drawn back, saying that Charles was as much king of Scotland as of England ; but they agreed, nevertheless, to receive £200,000, the half of the sum allotted to them, and the English parliament ordered the removal of the king to Holmby Castle. "I am bought and sold," he said, on hearing of the vote ; but he showed neither distrust nor fear on the journey to his new abode.

But while the Commons fancied that they had the game in their own hands, the tables were turned against them by Cromwell and his military partisans. On the 2nd of June, Joyce, a cornet of Fairfax's guards, forced his way into Charles's bedroom after he had gone to rest, and informed him that he must leave Holmby under his charge the next morning. At six o'clock Joyce appeared. The king asked him for his commission, and Joyce pointed to his soldiers. "It is written in legible characters," said the king ; but he refused to stir until he had a pledge, which was solemnly given, that nothing should be required of him against his conscience or his honour. The choice of his destination being left to him, he selected Newmarket.

At Childersley, near Cambridge, Fairfax met him in company with Cromwell, Ireton, and the rest of his staff, and said that he knew nothing of his removal from Holmby. Joyce, on being summoned, said that he had admitted to the king the fact of his having no warrant, but professed himself ready to suffer death if three-fourths of the army failed to approve what he had done.

Cromwell studiously kept aloof. He had made up his mind to play a part, or rather many parts, all of which should serve for his own advantage. In the House of Commons he prayed, with a vehement out-

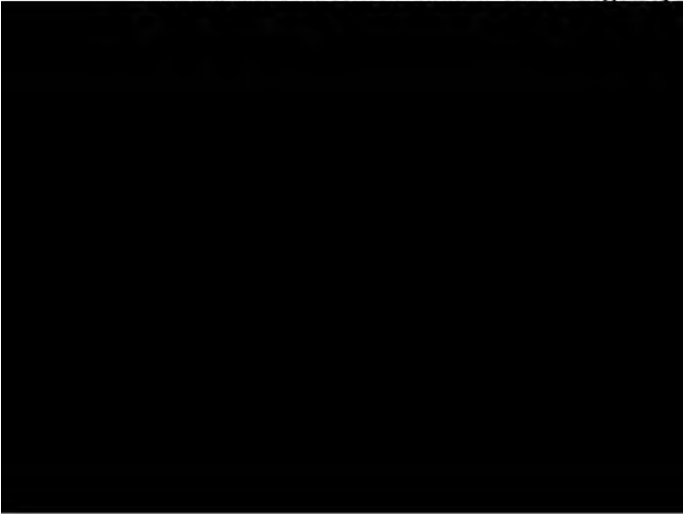
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burst of weeping, that all the curses of God might light on his head, if any man in the land was more faithful to the parliament than he. A few days later he declared that no one had been more deceived than himself about the king, who was, he insisted, the best man in the three kingdoms, and that he with the Independents would have been ruined if Charles had accepted the proposals of the Scots. "May God," he added, "deal out His goodness to me according to the sincerity of my heart towards his majesty."

Charles at Carisbrook Castle.
Nov. 1647 -
Nov. 1648.

But Charles could no more trust Cromwell and his army than they could trust him. Escaping, therefore from Hampton Court to Carisbrook in the Isle of Wight, he hoped that there he might have some respite from his troubles. Strong suspicions were felt and expressed that Cromwell had a hand in the king's flight. To Charles he sent a message, saying "I will do my best to serve him, but he must not expect me to ruin myself for his sake." There was the same double-dealing on both sides. Charles was negotiating with the Scots for a renewed invasion of England, and



war. It had more the character of an insurrection than of war, and it broke out prematurely. It was, in fact, little more than a movement of the Cavaliers, with which the Presbyterians had little sympathy; and wherever Fairfax met them, it was put down without mercy. The Presbyterians became weary of this violence. The people, they said, must no longer be fuel to the fire in which salamanders live, nor feed these horse-leeches of the army with their own blood and marrow. Parliament resolved on opening fresh negotiations with the king; but it was a matter of little consequence now that Charles wrote to his supporters to obey his wife's orders, not his own, until he should be free of all restraint. His enemies were becoming accustomed to his methods of dealing with them. The conference at Newport came to nothing. The uprising of his adherents came to nothing also.

It was needful now for the army leaders to strike the decisive blow. A detachment of troops hurried Charles from Carisbrook to Hurst Castle. The Commons voted that he had been taken away without their knowledge or consent, and again debated the conditions of peace. One of the most earnest speakers was Prynne, the victim of Laud's tyranny (p. 371). No man had suffered more in the cause of the people; but he was none the more blinded to the dangers involved in the predominance of the army. "If the army forsake us," he said, "God Himself and the kingdom will stand by us; and if the king and we shall happily conclude this treaty, I hope we shall have no great need for their future service."

It was time, in Cromwell's language, to purge the parliament. A force of infantry commanded by Colonel Pride was drawn up before the House, and

Removal of the
King to Hurst
Castle. Nov.
30, 1648.

The Purging of
the Parliam-
ent. Dec. 6,
1648.

Pride, holding a list of the proscribed members in his hand, turned them back at the door, as they entered to take their seats. To the demand, by what right this was done, the answer of Hugh Peters, chaplain to Fairfax, was, "By the right of the sword." The next day the same device was repeated, and forty more members were expelled. In all 143 members were driven out or withdrew, and the Independents remained in an overwhelming majority.

The Parliament
no longer a
Representative
Assembly.

But, whatever they now were, they were no longer the Commons of England. In no sense did they represent the people, and the people had no means whatever for making their voice heard or their wishes known. But for this they cared nothing. In a sermon preached before this wretched remnant of a parliament once freely chosen, Hugh Peters told them that they were destined to bring the people out of the bondage of Egypt, but that the mode of this deliverance had not yet been revealed. Laying his head on the cushion for a few moments, then raising it suddenly, he cried, "Now I have it, by revelation. Now I shall tell you. This army must root up monarchy not here only, but in France and in the kingdoms round about. This is to bring you out of Egypt."

Petitions and
Proposals for
the Impeach-
ment of the
King. 1648.

The work of purging was scarcely ended when Cromwell, entering the House, declared that, God being his witness, he knew nothing of what had been doing in the House, but the work was in hand, and he was glad of it, and now they must carry it through. Petitions were poured in that the king must be brought to trial, and a troop was sent to bring him from Hurst Castle to Windsor. On the 23rd of December 1648, a committee was appointed to draw up his impeachment; but even in this purged assembly some rose to object. A few thought that he should be quietly deposed,

a few that he should be quietly murdered. By the twelve peers present in their House the ordinance was indignantly rejected. "I would be torn to pieces," said Lord Denbigh, "rather than take part in so infamous a business."

But the faction which called itself the House of Commons was not to be stayed in its course. Their number was only 135; and 58 only of these could be got together at the preparatory meetings before the trial. Some who came only to protest. Among these was Algernon Sidney, the hater of monarchical, the lover of republican, government. His fear was that such measures might make a republic hateful in the eyes of the people, who might rise up in insurrection. "No one will stir," said Cromwell; "I tell you, we will cut off his head with the crown upon it." "I cannot hinder you," was Sidney's answer; "but I certainly will have nothing to do with this affair."

On the 20th of January 1649, Charles was brought before the bar of the committee in Westminster Hall. John Bradshaw, a cousin of the poet Milton, was president; John Cook, a friend of Milton, was attorney-general. About noon the approach of the king was announced. "My masters, he is come, he is come," cried Cromwell; "and now we are doing the great work that the whole nation will be full of. Therefore let us resolve what answer we shall give the king, for the first question he will ask will be, by what authority and commission we try him." All others being silent, Henry Martyn said, "In the name of the Commons and parliament assembled, and of all the good people of England." Unhappily Charles was not arraigned before the Commons, nor did he appear before a parliament, nor were the people of

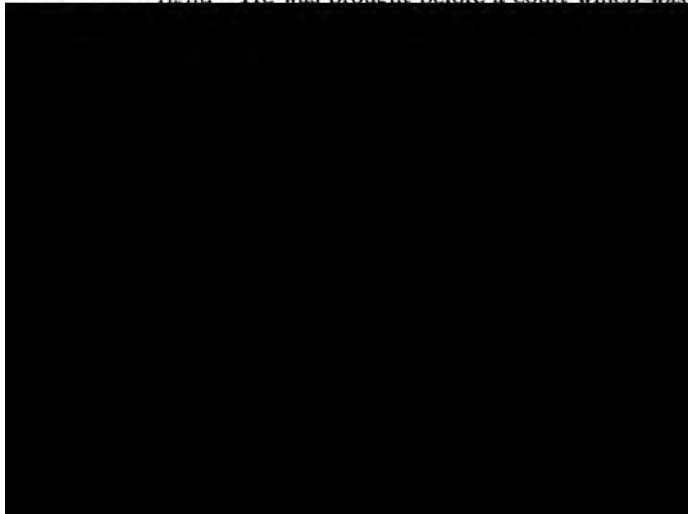
England in any way represented in this strange assembly.

**Question of the
Authority of
the Court.**

As soon as Charles had taken his seat, Bradsford informed him that the Commons of England resolved to bring him to trial for the effusion of blood in the land. As Cromwell had supposed, the king asked by what authority he had been brought thither. "I mean lawful authority, for there are many useful powers, such as those of highwaymen," Bradsford answered that they acted in the name of the English people, by whom he had been elected king. "No, sir, this I deny. England," he added, "never was an elective kingdom. It has been for more than a thousand years an hereditary kingdom." It was an unhappy thing that his judges should assume the name of the English people, when they had deprived themselves of all right to use it, and that Charles should betray so strange an ignorance of glaring facts in the history of that people (pp. 66, 128, 133, 156, &c.).

**The King's Re-
fusal to Plead.**

For the moment Charles was thoroughly in the right. He was brought before a court which was



brought by the people of England, the same voice cried, "It is a lie. Not one tenth of them." The speaker was found to be Lady Fairfax. Before the passing of the sentence Charles was permitted to address the court. He asked to be heard by the Lords and Commons on a proposal of more importance to his kingdom and his subjects than to his own preservation.

Bradshaw treated the appeal as a trick to escape the jurisdiction of the court. One of the members, Colonel Downs, became greatly agitated, and rose from his chair. "What do you mean?" cried Cromwell. "Can't you be quiet?" "No," he answered, "I cannot;" and, turning to the president, he said that he could not give his consent to the sentence. The court adjourned to another room. Downs insisted that they ought to hear the king, and to respect in his person the common rules of justice. Repeatedly and rudely interrupting him, Cromwell asked him if he knew that they were dealing with the hardest-hearted man on earth. "It was not fit," he added, "that the court should be hindered from their duty by one peevish man." They proceeded accordingly to do their duty by condemning the king to die as a traitor and a murderer.

His Condemnation.

Fifty-nine signatures only were collected to the order for execution; and of these many, either purposely or from agitation, were so scrawled as to be almost, if not quite, illegible. Cromwell was the third to sign, and having signed he smeared with the ink the face of Henry Martyn, who returned the compliment. On the morning of the 30th, Cromwell, with Ireton, proceeded to draw up the order for the executioner. Turning to Colonel Huncks, he summoned him to write and sign it. Huncks firmly

The Order for his Execution.

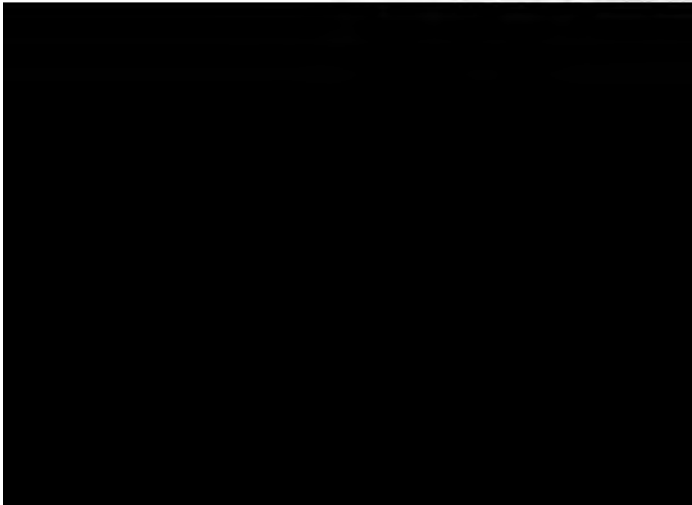
refused. "What a stubborn grumbler!" said Crom and he wrote the order himself.

Execution of
the King. Jan.
30, 1649

On the scaffold Charles behaved with serene dignity. He placed in the hands of Juxon, the bishop of London, a short paper in which he set forth principles on which he had acted, and on which alone, as he believed, a just government could be carried on. "I go," he said, "from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown. I have on my side a good cause and a merciful God." The axe fell, and the executioner held up the severed head with the usual formula that it was the head of a traitor. Cromwell came to look on the body as it lay in the coffin, and remarked that it was a frame which promised a long life.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

THE COMMONWEALTH.



proportion of the clergy declared that they would have nothing to do with a republic. But in spite of all the threatened dangers, the remnant of the Long Parliament, now contemptuously called the Rump, refused to dissolve itself.

While things were in this state, Cromwell went to bring Ireland into order. He accomplished his work by merciless massacre at Drogheda and at Wexford; and the prince of Wales, who had been acknowledged as king by the Scots, instead of going, as he had purposed, first to Ireland, found himself driven to accept the conditions imposed upon him by the Covenanters, and go to Scotland. Meanwhile Cromwell had returned to London, and thence started again with the army for the north. His victory at Dunbar (Sept. 3, 1650) led Charles to think that he might have a better chance of defeating his great enemy on English soil; but this hope was utterly destroyed by Cromwell's second decisive victory at Worcester, after a contest which he described as among the stiffest he had ever seen (3rd Sept. 1651).

Battles of Dunbar and Worcester. 1650, 1651.

There was no one now to dispute the pre-eminence of Cromwell. But, although he declared that the army was disgusted with the Commons, the latter still stuck to their posts. They were encouraged in this by some success achieved in the naval war with Holland. Blake had at least managed not to be defeated by Van Tromp. Cromwell's patience was exhausted. Taking with him a company of musketeers, he went to the Commons and told them that their hour was come, and that he would put an end to their prating. In answer to their protests he merely said, "You are no parliament." As the soldiers entered, the members hurried out. The mace was taken away, and the doors were locked (April 10, 1653). The country was now

Dissolution of the so-called Parliament by Cromwell. 1653.

The Constituent
Convention, or
Barebones
Parliament.
1653.

without even the pretence of a legal government, and the responsibility of keeping order lay with Cromwell.

The officers of the army now stepped in. A council was appointed; but the council, instead of summoning a new parliament, set up a Constituent Convention, to which Cromwell resigned his power. But this assembly, known as the Barebones Parliament (from Praise-God Barebones, a leather merchant, who was one of the members), soon found that it could not work, and in its turn gave back power to Cromwell (Dec. 12, 1653).

Parliament of
1654.

In April 1654 the new parliament met, the first which representatives from Scotland and Ireland sat beside those of England. They encountered a new difficulty, caused not so much by Cromwell's in the interval, as by his mode of speaking of the past. He had regulated the condition of the Church and the law, and he demanded that the parliament should approve his acts without debate. His calling and testimony, he said, were from God and the people, and to them only would he surrender them.

to a Royalist restoration ; nor did the division of the country under ten military governments tend to quiet them.

The results of Cromwell's tyranny were great indeed. Bishop Burnet afterwards spoke of his eight years of usurpation as a period of great peace and prosperity. England flourished internally, and it was respected and feared abroad. A fleet under Blake bombarded Algiers, and destroyed the pirate vessels which had been in the habit of swooping down on the English coasts (p. 368). Cromwell was at peace with Holland, and the cession of Dunkirk was a recompense for the aid given to France against Flanders.

Results of the
Protectorate.

Anxious to acquire a legal basis for all that he was doing, Cromwell summoned another parliament, which requested that he would take the title of king. The reason for this request was the wish not to extend but to limit his power, "the king's prerogative," as they said, "being under courts of justice, and bounded as well as any acre of land," while there were no traditional means for limiting the powers of the new and undefined office of Protector. Cromwell turned to the army, and the army demanded the withdrawal of the proposal "in the name of the old cause for which they had bled." Cromwell accordingly refused the offer (May 8, 1657), but he accepted the Constitution framed by the assembly. Parliament was to consist of two houses, the seventy members of "the other house" being named by the Protector (1657).

Cromwell and
the Kingly
Title. 1657.

But this assembly, like those which preceded it, was slow in voting supplies, and Cromwell, irritated by the delay in paying the army, suddenly dissolved it. It was the last parliament summoned by him. He was not more than fifty-eight years of age ; but fever had laid its hand heavily upon him, and on the

Death of Crom-
well. 1658.

anniversary of the day on which he had won his victories of Dunbar and Worcester, his strong rule came quietly to an end, Sept. 3, 1658.

**Protectorate of
Richard Crom-
well. 1658-59.**

He had been authorized by parliament to name a successor, and he was supposed on his deathbed to have named his son Richard, a man of no strength or worth, and suspected of being at heart a royalist. The parliament which met under Richard set to work to put down the army. The army in its turn demanded the dissolution of parliament, and Richard was constrained to comply. In its place the soldiers resolved to summon the members still surviving of the Long Parliament, which might be supposed to exist, as they had never formally dissolved themselves (p. 375).

**The Restoration
of the Mon-
archy. 1661.**

About ninety members took their seats, but they had not forgiven the army for their expulsion; when they insisted on depriving the principal military chiefs of their commands, the latter drove out parliament and marched to meet General Monk, who advanced southward with a Scottish army. Monk

CHAPTER LXXIX.

THE REIGN OF CHARLES II.

ALTHOUGH, when he came back to Whitehall, Charles seemed to be restored to a power less fettered than that which his father or grandfather had ever enjoyed, and although the change in the lives and habits of the people consequent on the restoration was vast indeed, still the House of Commons grew steadily in strength and influence. The Convention declared itself a parliament, and proceeded to deal with questions of indemnity and oblivion.

Growing Power
of the House
of Commons.

Caring little for consistency with his promises in the Declaration of Breda, Charles pressed for justice on the men of whom he spoke as his father's murderers. Of those who had been his judges, twenty-eight were tried and thirteen were executed. But to the illegal practices of the late reign no return was allowed. The army was disbanded, three regiments only being retained, which became the nucleus of the modern standing army of England; and Charles was constrained to receive a fixed annual sum in return for the surrender of the multitude of feudal privileges which the English kings had thus far retained and exercised.

Position of
Charles II.
1661.

But as in the time of Charles I., so now the path of religious settlement was by no means so easy as the political (p. 374). The members of the Convention were chiefly Presbyterians; and they hoped to be able at the least to devise some modified form of Episcopacy which would enable the Puritan or Non-conformist clergy to retain their livings. But the Cavaliers' parliament, which succeeded the Conven-

The Black Day
of St. Bartho-
lomew, 1662.

tion, would listen to no such compromise. The "League and Covenant" was burnt by the hangman; the bishops were restored to the House of Lords, and the Book of Common Prayer became the form to be exclusively used in divine service. Refusing to comply, nearly 2000 rectors and vicars, about a fifth part of the English clergy, were driven from their livings on St. Bartholomew's Day (1662); and these were for the most part men of the highest character, as well as of the greatest talent.

Origin and
Growth of
Dissent.

The nonconformity of these ministers now became dissent. It was no longer an influence within, but a hostile force without, the Church of England. Now the persecution limited to the penalties attached to infringements of the Act of Uniformity (1662). The Conventicle Act punished all meetings of more than five persons assembled for any other worship than that of the Common Prayer-Book; and by the Five Mile Act (1665), dissenting preachers were forbidden to go within five miles of any borough or any place where they had ever ministered.



of Milton, and his later poems, may be regarded as a protest; but they may also be taken as proving that to the heart of the English people the distinction between right and wrong, between purity and lewdness, was as strongly marked and as clear as ever.

The great scene of this uprising against Puritan strictness was necessarily London; and this city was now to suffer from extraordinary and unlooked for disasters. In the renewed war with Holland some defeats were followed by a partial victory; but any satisfaction which might have been felt in this success was merged in horror at the awful scourge which desolated the city in 1665. The number of victims in the Great Plague exceeded perhaps even the number of those who were smitten by the Black Death in the days of Edward III. (p. 259); and in the very year which followed this frightful visitation, a fire, breaking out near the Tower, destroyed the whole city as far as the Temple. At this time, when neither ships nor men were ready, the Dutch fleet sailed up the Thames to Gravesend, burnt three men-of-war, and remained for six weeks unopposed in the English Channel.

The Great
Plague
London. 1665

The humiliation of these Dutch victories led many to look back with regret and pride on the vigour and wisdom of Oliver Cromwell. Charles II. was in their eyes a mere idler, for whom the most hateful thing in the world was business of any kind. They misjudged him. It is true that he was a lover of sensual pleasures of the coarsest sort, and it is also true that he had resolutely made up his mind not to incur the fate of his father. "Come what may," he said, "I am not going to be sent on my travels again."

Fire of London
Dutch Victories
in the Thames
1666.

But he was not less determined on being an

Motives and
Aims of the
King.

and executed (1678), although no real evidence was carried away by the madness of the old fever; the king would have nothing to say to the exclusion and he dissolved the parliament (July 1879). Another met (March 21, 1681), and within a few days dissolved this one also, and appealed to the nation generally.

**Ecclesiastical
Theories
of
Royal Authority.**

His appeal met with no little enthusiasm, the clergy especially, in the teeth of history, being loud in their assertion that the principle of hereditary succession could be set aside by "no religion, no fault, and no forfeiture." Charles was gratified and felt that he might yet grasp the crown which he coveted. He was aware of the difficulties in his path. The Habeas Corpus Act, passed in 1679, had finally secured to every Englishman the right guaranteed to him in the Great Charter of King John (p. 216), of ascertaining the legality of his own imprisonment; and it was therefore impossible for

was followed by its withdrawal. A like fate befell a few other boroughs; and a general surrender of charters was the consequence. New ones were granted, by which only Royalists could be members of the corporation, and their representation in parliament was thus placed virtually in the hands of the crown.

Lastly, Charles had his regiments of guards, and he regarded with satisfaction their increasing numbers. Nor had he any reason for calling into question the zeal of his supporters. Lord Russell had died for his alleged complicity in the plot which had been formed, it was said, for the assassination of the king at the Rye House near Newmarket. With Lord Russell had fallen (Dec. 7, 1683) Algernon Sidney, the staunch republican, who had refused (p. 395) to have anything to do with the court which tried and condemned Charles I.

Execution of
Lord Russell
and Algernon
Sidney. 1783.

A review of the past might seem therefore to give the king much encouragement for the future. But illness cut short his plans. He knew himself to be dying, and apologized for being so unconscionably long in doing so; but, having blessed the English bishops who knelt around his bed, he had them hurried away, and Huddleston, a Roman Catholic priest, whose help had saved his life after the battle of Worcester, was introduced, and Charles once more submitted himself to the Church of Rome.

Death of Charles
II. 1685.

CHAPTER LXXX.

THE REIGN OF JAMES II.

THE Duke of York was now king (Feb. 6, 1685); but the seed sown by Shaftesbury was still to produce its

Rebellion and
Execution of
Monmouth.
1685.

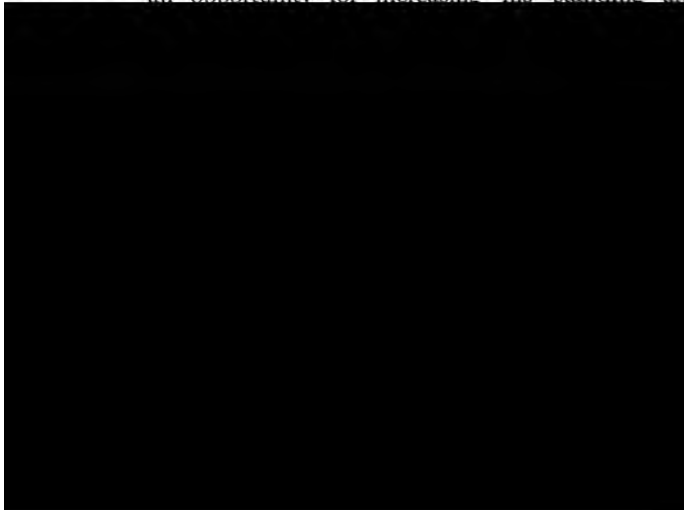
disastrous crop. The Duke of Monmouth, who with William of Orange at the Hague, arranged with the Earl of Argyle for a simultaneous insurrection in Scotland, and in the south-west of England. Argyle's rising was suppressed at once, and was followed immediately by his execution. Monmouth might possibly have achieved success, had he not been led into the blunder of assuming the title of king. At Sedgemoor his forces were completely broken; and James, inexorable to all entreaty, hurried his nephew to the block.

**The Bloody
Assize.**

But Monmouth's death was nothing. The chief justice, George Jeffreys, a man only thirty-six years of age, was sent down to hold a "Bloody Assize," in which he hanged 330 rebels, and sold 800 more into foreign slavery. For severity which horrified even John Churchill (afterwards Duke of Marlborough), whom the victory at Sedgemoor was mainly due to, Jeffreys was made Lord Chancellor.

**The King's
Standing Army.**

To the king Monmouth's rebellion was welcome as an opportunity for increasing his standing army.



and told the parliament that his power to do so must not be questioned.

But he needed money for his troops, and the Commons, as of old, insisted on redress of grievances before they would vote supplies. The bishops protested against the violation of the Test Act. James prorogued the Houses, and took the opinion of his judges, who declared that a royal dispensation barred the operation of that Act. But if this Act could be disregarded, so might others; and James fancied that in this task he would have the hearty co-operation of the English clergy. They had insisted with the greatest earnestness on the divine right of kings and on the duty of absolute submission on the part of the subject. James took them at their word, and concluded that they would yield this submission, even when they should be called on to act against their own inclinations or convictions. He was making a fatal blunder.


His attempts to force his own nominees on the universities and colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, were practically failures. He was not much more successful with his lay peers. A papal Nuncio was again to be seen in the English court. The Duke of Somerset, on being ordered to introduce him, answered, that he could not do so without breaking the law. "Do you not know," said James, "that I am above the law?" "Your majesty may be," was the reply; "but I am not."

But, if the Church held out, the result might be otherwise with the Nonconformists and the dissenters. With great confidence James published a Declaration of Indulgence, which annulled all penal laws, and did away with all tests as a qualification for offices of any kind. The offer was a tempting one, and it

might have been supposed that they who had suffered from the intolerance of the age would catch greed at the bait. After a short hesitation it was almost universally rejected. It was beyond doubt that no concession was made with a purpose, and that, if the king could only gain his ends, all who refused to submit themselves to the Church of Rome would be treated by him as they would have been dealt with by the papal Inquisition.

**The Trial and
Acquittal of
the Seven
Bishops. 1688.**

James's thoughts next turned to the summoning of a parliament, the members of which should be pledged to the repeal of the Test Act; but an attempt to pack such an assembly was found to be hopeless. In the last resort he ordered the English clergy to publish in their churches a fresh "Declaration of Indulgence." It was read in four London churches only, and in these the congregations walked out as soon as they heard the opening words. The bishops supported their clergy, and, by the advice of the Chancellor Jeffreys, seven of them were charged with seditious libel. They refused to give bail.



An invitation, signed by a crowd of illustrious names, was sent to William. Treachery was at work in every quarter. Among the traitors were the Earl of Sunderland, and John Churchill, who had won the victory for the king at Sedgemoor. Resistance was hopeless, because there was no army which would fight for him; but no effort was made to seize his person. On the contrary, the way of escape was studiously left open to him; and James left the English shore for France (Dec. 23, 1688).

Flight of James II. to France. 1688.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

THE REIGN OF WILLIAM III. AND MARY.

THE first act of the prince of Orange, after reaching London, was to invite the electors of England to send up representatives to a Convention which met in January 1689. This assembly declared that James had violated the fundamental laws of the land, and that, having withdrawn himself from the kingdom, he had abdicated the government, and left the throne vacant. The Tories contended that the throne was not vacant, but that it had passed of right to his daughter Mary. But the Commons generally were resolved that they would leave no loophole for evading the doctrine that kings reign in England only by virtue of their election. The matter was settled by Mary's refusal to reign unless her husband reigned with her, and by William's refusal to be a regent. He had no notion, he said, of being his wife's gentleman usher.

Election of William and Mary. 1689.

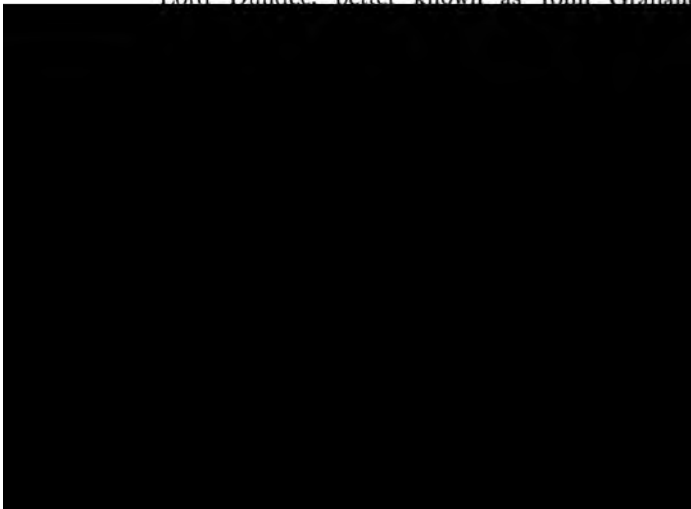
Both accordingly were elected, and declared to be king and queen of England. A long Declaration of

The Bill of Rights.

Rights defined the relations of the sovereign and subject ; and this declaration, being thrown into form of a Bill of Rights, became law. All notions of divine right, or of any hereditary right apart from law, were thus scattered to the winds ; and it has been well said, that an English monarch is now as much the creature of an act of parliament as is the petty tax-gatherer in his realm, and that since the election of William and Mary no English sovereign has been able to advance any claim to the crown, save a claim which rested on a particular clause in a particular act of parliament. This fact explains the real significance of the attempts made in 1715 and 1745, by the elder Pretender and by his son Charles Edward, to wrest the crown from the house of Hanover, and to place it on the head of a king who claimed it by personal indefeasible right ; in other words, to deprive the people of their right of election.

The Battle of
Killiecrankie,
1689.

These doctrines were indignantly rejected by James and by his more thorough-going supporters. Lord Dundee, better known as John Graham



Stair obtained the signature of William to a document ordering the extirpation of his clan; and it was ruthlessly executed. The massacre of Glencoe remains a terrible blot on William's fame as a great and wise statesman.

But it was in Ireland that James was to make his supreme effort to recover his lost possessions. For 105 days he besieged Londonderry, where the citizens were stirred to heroic enthusiasm by the exhortations of a clergyman named Walker. The place was all but starved out, when English ships found their way up the river. Raising the siege, James marched to Dublin, and there strove to insure the ruin of the English settlers by the repeal of the Act of Settlement, which served as their title to whatever property they possessed.

Siege of London-
derry. 1689.

William felt that it was time for himself to interfere. Landing at Carrickfergus, he found James's army strongly posted on the banks of the Boyne. The battle which followed was a fatal defeat for James, who hurried first to Dublin, and then to Kinsale, whence he sailed to France, to spend the rest of his life at St. Germain's.

Battle of the
Boyne. 1690.

From the horrors which preceded and followed James's departure from Ireland, we may turn with a feeling of relief to the history of constitutional growth in England. The nation was under great obligations to William; but when he complained that parliament had granted him the royal revenue for four years only (p. 403), the only answer made by the House was to restrict it to an annual grant; and an annual grant it has remained from that time to the present. This arrangement met the serious difficulty involved in the dealing with the army. The State cannot exist without supplies, the army cannot be maintained without

Parliament and
the Question
of Supply.

pay. If the supplies and the pay depend on annual vote of parliament, then parliament must meet every year; and a fresh guarantee of liberty furnished by the method of dealing with those matters which were sources of the most painful and abiding anxiety under the Stuart kings.

**The Bill of
Toleration,
1689.**

The settlement of religious differences was easy. Some, who were therefore called Latitudinarians, hoped that an arrangement might be devised by which Nonconformists and Dissenters might again be included in the communion of the Established Church. But the Comprehension Bill, urged by the king, failed to pass; and William's efforts to bring about a repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts came to nothing. He succeeded, however, in carrying the Bill of Toleration, not only in England but in Scotland, where it was met by a far more resolute resistance. William, indeed, saw the true nature of toleration, and he had no scruple in expressing his convictions. "We never could be of that mind," he said, "that violence was suited to the religious

quietly to deprivation; but from this moment they looked on themselves as the only true members of the Church of England.

For the divisions and controversies thus caused there was some compensation in the growth of the English political constitution. The cabinets or councils of previous kings had been merely gatherings of individual servants of the crown, to which alone they were responsible. If the Commons had a strong objection to any one of them, they might perhaps get rid of him by impeachment; but they had no recognised means for putting a more suitable man in his place. William gladly followed the advice of Lord Sunderland (p. 419), to choose his ministers from the party which might at the moment be strongest in the House of Commons; so that, as representing the majority in the House, they would be its natural leaders. The result was that the ministers became, not less naturally, servants of the House and not of the king; and a change in the balance of parties involved a change in the ministers who gave expression to the will of the predominant party.

Nor was this all. The Bank of England was established in 1694; and the growth of the national debt not only showed the power and benefit of the national credit, but furnished a new safeguard against the return of the Stuarts, who must at once have repudiated it. The strength thus acquired at home imparted greater strength to William's foreign policy. But in 1694 William was left to reign alone; the queen died of smallpox, and William felt the loss severely.

By the peace of Ryswick (1697), Louis XIV. recognised William as king of England; and the

great conspiracy drawn out by the Treaty of De (p. 406) was for the time given up as a hopeless failure. Louis had gained little or nothing by recent victories of his forces. The battle of Beach Head (1690), from which Lord Torrington had been drawn into the Thames, was barren of results; and the French fleet had in its turn undergone a serious defeat off Cape La Hogue (1692), at the hands of Admiral Russell, brother of Lord Russell who had died on the scaffold for his alleged share in the Rye House Plot (p. 411).

Schemes of
Marlborough.

Like Admiral Russell, Marlborough was, to the least, meditating treason; and the end of the scheme was his own aggrandisement. His hope was that William's crown might be transferred to Princess Anne; and that, through the influence of his own wife over Anne, he might himself be virtuous sovereign of England. The discovery of his purpose was followed by his dismissal from all his offices (1691); but Marlborough returned to court with

princess Anne, after the death of queen Mary.

had been practically secured ; and he was content to leave the achievement of it to the one man who showed that he had powers adequate to the task. Marlborough had not shown himself worthy of his trust ; but there was no one who could approach him in his genius.

Almost at the same time when the second Grand Alliance was formed, James II. died ; and the recognition of his son as James III. by the French king stirred up the old enthusiasm of the English people, which had for some time been chilled. William was not a man likely to make himself personally popular ; but his coldness and the favour shown to his Dutch followers were all forgotten in the sudden outburst of indignation against the foreign monarch who had dared to confer a title which the English nation had deliberately rejected. They were ready now to help on William's plans to the uttermost ; but William's wars were ended. He died from the effects of a fall from his horse, February 1702, and in accordance with the Act of Settlement he was succeeded by Anne, the second daughter of James II. and Anne Hyde, daughter of Edward Hyde, the historian of the Great Rebellion (p. 377).

CHAPTER LXXXII.

THE REIGN OF ANNE.

THE chief lustre reflected on the reign of queen Anne comes from the victories of Marlborough. Not having any selfish purpose to answer by taking any other course, Marlborough was indefatigable in

carrying out William's policy for the humiliation of the French king. For the first time since his accession the armies of Louis were completely defeated on the battlefield. Twenty thousand only escaped from the carnage of the fight at Blenheim (1704). The spell of military success, which had powerfully aided the plans of Louis XIV., was at last broken by the generalship of Marlborough.

Battle of Ramillies. 1705.

In the following year (1705) Marlborough inflicted on Louis a defeat scarcely less terrible than the field of Ramillies in Brabant. As carrying out the policy of William III., the war was essentially a Whig war; that is, a war carried on by that party which represented the opponents of James I. and Charles I. in the struggle for absolute power. But Marlborough's sympathies were supposed to lie, as those of the queen lay, with the Tories; and the influence of the queen, secured on the side of Marlborough by his friendship with his wife, removed difficulties which must otherwise have been encountered in the prosecution of the struggle. Marlborough was the

occasional conformity was favoured by Marlborough, and in the end became law. The bill was opposed in the Lords; but their opposition no more implied a genuine adhesion to the principles of freedom of thought and worship, than was implied by the Declarations of Indulgence put forth by Charles II. and his brother James.

A more creditable piece of legislation was the act which empowered the queen to set aside the first-fruits and tenths paid now by the clergy to the crown (as before the Reformation they had been paid to the Pope), to serve as a fund for adding to the incomes of poor livings. The fund is known as the Queen Anne's Bounty.

Queen Anne's
Bounty.

In the same year with the victory at Ramillies (1705) the union of England with Scotland, which had been done away with at the Restoration, was a second time and finally, after great opposition, accomplished. That it could not be carried out in complete agreement with the wishes of either nation was clear. The Scotch had acquired a hatred of English Episcopacy, and they would have no share in the English national debt. On the other side, the English refused to concede to the Scotch any share in their trade with the colonies.

Union of Eng-
land and Scot-
land. 1706.

But it was well to lose no time in bringing about the union on any practicable terms. The Whigs of Scotland, whose first object was the independence of their country, were being tempted into making common cause with the Jacobites, who were ready to restore the Pretender. In the end the proposals for a federative union were rejected, and a complete legislative union was determined on. No interference was attempted in the legal or ecclesiastical concerns of Scotland; but the restrictions on trade

Conditions of
the Union.

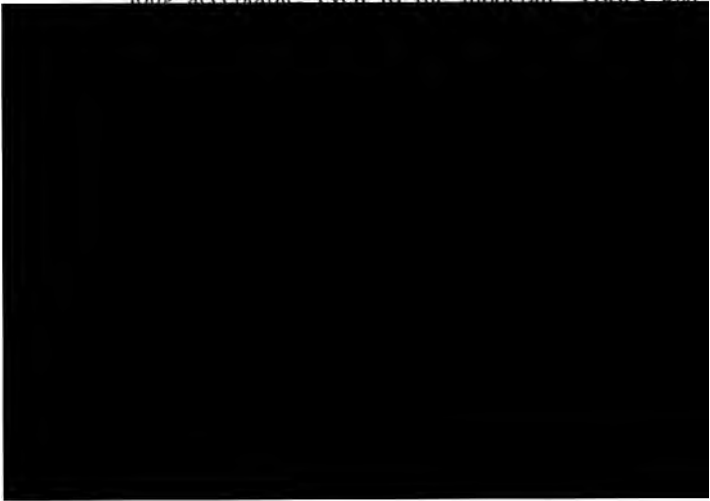
were removed, forty-five Scotch members were introduced into the House of Commons, and sixteen representative peers into the House of Lords.

results of the
Union.

Giving her assent to the act in 1707, the queen said that she desired and expected from her subjects of both nations that they would henceforth act with all possible respect and kindness to one another, and thus show to the world that they had hearts disposed to become one people. Her hopes have been fully realized. The wealth and prosperity of Scotland have, since the Union, increased out of all proportion with the slow progress made in many preceding centuries. The two peoples are one in blood and speech; and it has been well said that the union has been real and stable because it was the legislative acknowledgment and enforcement of a national fact.

Marlborough
and the Tories.

The great struggle with the French king, which William III. bequeathed as his inheritance to Marlborough, was one which was not likely to remain long acceptable even to the moderate Tories who



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At length, in 1713, the war of the Grand Alliance was brought to an end by the peace of Utrecht. Two years later Louis XIV. died. He had begun to reign nominally seventy years before, when he was a child of five years old, when Hampden was disputing the legality of ship money (p. 371), and when Charles I. still hoped that he might master his subjects without a war. Throughout his life he had been the unwavering champion of absolutism and Popery; but a bitter experience had taught him the uselessness of attempting to enslave the world. He had recognised William III.; he had recognised Anne; and he lived to recognise George I. The Stuarts were left to do as best they could, with indirect or secret help; and their ruin was the natural, if not the necessary, result of his policy.

For the restoration of the Stuarts some efforts, it is said, were being made even by the ministers of the queen. The charge of treason was brought against Harley, now Earl of Oxford, and against Bolingbroke. It cannot be regarded as legally proved in the case of the former; and the chief evidence against Bolingbroke is the fact that he afterwards entered the service of the Pretender, and became his Secretary of State. But this proves little for overt acts of treachery during the reign of queen Anne. While Anne still lived, his great object was to fill all important offices of State with Tories, in order that George I., on his

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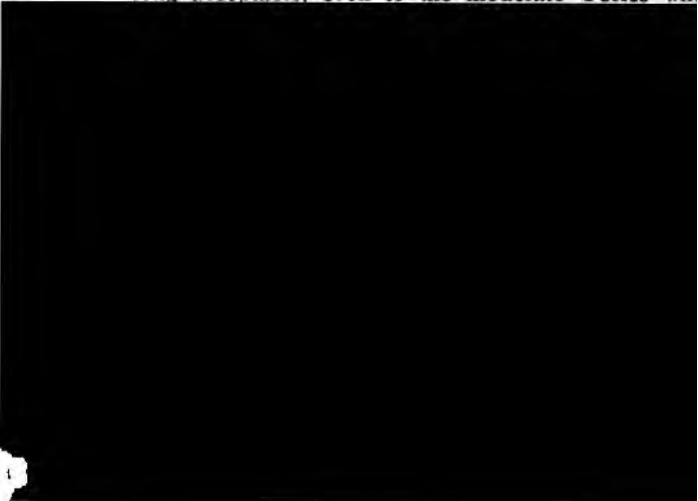
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Peace of
Utrecht. 1713.

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Charges against
Harley and
Bolingbroke.

coming, might find himself overpowered by a strong majority.

death of the
Queen. 1714.

In this plan Harley showed a lack of zeal and Bolingbroke resolved on his downfall. Harley was dismissed; but before any further arrangements could be made the queen was taken ill and in a few days she died (1714). Her own children had all died before her, and by the Act of Settlement the crown passed to George I., the Elector of Hanover.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

THE REIGN OF GEORGE I.

selection of
George I.

IN determining the order of succession after the death of Anne's children, the parliament went back to the descendants of Elizabeth, daughter of James I. (p. 363). Roman Catholics were excluded; but Elizabeth had married the Protestant Elector of Hanover.



and the first George was unable to speak English. This ignorance of the language kept him away from all meetings of the Cabinet; and the precedent was thus established, that the sovereign should not be present at the meetings of this body of their ministers.

The ministers of the first Georges all belonged to the Whig party. "The Tory party is gone," was the declaration of Bolingbroke after the death of queen Anne. The Whigs were united in the working out of a definite set of principles. The Tories were divided in their political theories, and their thoughts were fixed on the restoration of an expelled dynasty.

Whigs and
Tories.

An attempt to restore it was made in the year following the accession of George I. It was the second effort, and it had less chance of success than the first, which had been brought to an end in 1707 by the accidental illness of the prince who called himself James III. The discovery of the conspiracy was followed by the impeachment of Harley and the flight of Bolingbroke. Although this should have shown him the hopelessness of the enterprise, James insisted that the Earl of Mar should summon the Highland clans to his standard. But Mar was incapable as a general, and James was as sluggish and incompetent as Mar. His forces surrendered at Preston, and James hurried back to France, leaving Lord Derwentwater and some other gentlemen to pay with their lives the penalty of their devotion to his cause.

The Rebellion of
1715.


Taken as a body, the ministers of George I. were before their times. After repealing the penal statutes passed in Anne's reign, it was their wish to get rid of the Test Act, so far as it bore upon the Dissenters; but they found that popular feeling was utterly

Septennial Par-
liaments.

opposed to any such measures. Failing in this, it passed the bill which extended the period between one election for parliament and another from three years to seven. The House of Commons was the real depositary of power; and the shorter period seemed inconsistent with real stability in the work of government.

**The South Sea
Company.**

The time of rest which followed the treaty of Utrecht (p. 425) was marked by a vast growth of English commerce; and abundance of money led it commonly to lead, to risky and dangerous speculations. Of these the most seductive were the schemes of the South Sea Company, if schemes they could be called. The shares of the company were floated at absurd prices; and purchasers gave £1000 for what had never been worth more than £100, and soon became worth less than £50, or worth nothing. The bursting of this South Sea Bubble caused frightful misery (1721); it also brought about the downfall of the ministry, and Sir Robert Walpole



wholly from direct taxes on land, he hoped that indirect taxation might be the means of freeing the land from most of its burdens, if not from all of them. According to Walpole's plan, the necessities of life and the raw materials of manufacture were to be free of all imposts. All that he proposed to do has been done since ; but under the excitement which it caused the carrying out of his plan was in his day impossible.

Walpole, then, wished well to the country, and used no doubt the means by which alone it seemed practicable for him to attain his ends. Unfortunately, the readiest, if not the only feasible plan, appeared to be that of corruption. He was a man beyond the reach of bribes himself ; but he found that the Commons generally were men who were ready to traffic with their votes, and, in many cases, were men who would not give their vote without receiving an equivalent for it in offices, places, pensions, or hard cash.

Venality of the Commons.

The publicity of parliamentary speaking and voting, as now practised, was then unknown. Newspapers were not allowed to give the speeches of members, or the names of the voters in a division. From the time of their election to the time of the dissolution of the parliament, members passed out of the reach of their constituencies, just as by the same secrecy they had got beyond the reach of kings who sought to enslave them. Whether their representatives sold, or did not sell, their votes in the House, the electors never knew ; and, if they had known, would perhaps never have cared. In many boroughs the electors were themselves bought and sold ; and the evil, scandalous then, was to assume proportions which it would be impossible to tolerate. But with all his readiness to pay for votes, Walpole found himself face to face with

The Commons House and the Constituencies.


an opposition increasing in power, when George died, and was succeeded by his son, George (1727).

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

THE REIGN OF GEORGE II.

Walpole's Free
Trade Policy.

THE men who ranged themselves in opposition Walpole took pride in calling themselves patriots but the one motive by which they were animated was the desire to drive him from the ministry. It can be said that they had a more definite or a more rational line of policy, for the justification of Walpole's policy is to be found rather in our days than in his own. The ignorance or the short-sightedness of his opponents threw out the bill by which in 1733 he proposed to grapple with the evil of smuggling, by establishing bonded warehouses, and by raising revenue from inland dealers in the form of excise instead of leaving it at the ports in the form



He was equally strenuous, but not equally successful, in resisting the outcry for a war with Spain. He foresaw that the struggle would not be confined to that country. "They are ringing the bells now," he said, as the sounds of popular rejoicing caught his ear; "they will soon be wringing their hands." Had he followed his conscience by resigning, instead of sanctioning a war of which he disapproved, he would better have consulted his own reputation, and might have prolonged his term of power. As it was, his majority dwindled rapidly away, and he was driven to resign (1742).

Walpole and the Spanish War.

But, if Walpole did what he could to promote the interests of England in some directions, there were other fields which he left practically untouched. The extension of trade, the rise of new towns, the multiplication of manufactures, had added very largely to the population; but nothing had been done for their education or their moral improvement. No effort had been made to create new parishes, to build new churches, or to provide schools. The masses thus brought together grew up ignorant, depraved, and lawless; and the brutality and cruelty of the criminal laws well matched the degradation and savagery of the rabble.

The Criminal Laws, and the Manufacturing Population.

The cutting down of a cherry tree, the theft of any sum exceeding five shillings from the person or forty shillings from a house, were capital offences; and the condition of the prisons was perhaps even more terrible than the inhumanity which cleared them by wholesale executions. Vice, impurity, cruelty of the most hideous kinds, were suffered to go on unchecked in the horrid world hidden within the prison walls. Men, women, and children, left to herd together like brute beasts, wallowed in wretchedness and sin, on which not a ray of light and comfort ever broke.

State of the Prisons.

Rise of the
Oxford Metho-
dists.

But an impulse had been given which was to bring about a determined onslaught on these deadly evils. If this impulse did not originate with them, it took a definite direction in the hands of a small number of members of the University of Oxford, who rose in revolt against the moral and spiritual deadness and stagnation of the times. The severity and strictness of their discipline won for them the name of Methodists; and when in 1738 the more prominent members of the group were transferred to London, the intensity of their convictions soon produced a corresponding effect on the multitudes to whom they especially addressed themselves.

George White-
field.

The preaching of George Whitefield took his hearers by storm; but the dread of his enthusiasm soon closed to him the pulpits of the Established Church. He achieved a success still more wonderful by preaching in the open air. Thousands of colliers might be seen in tears, which worked white channels down their grimy cheeks, as Whitefield put before them the gloomy Calvinistic message with which he believed himself to be charged.

The Effects of
his Preaching.

The good which he did was great. It was not altogether unalloyed. If an undue excitement be not (as it probably is not) the most wholesome atmosphere for spiritual growth, then Whitefield deserved, in some measure, the strictures of his opponents. Hysterical and convulsive fits formed a running accompaniment to his sermons, and an awful terror was the only feeling frequently awakened in those who were listening to what was put before them as the good tidings of Divine Love.

John Wesley.

Whitefield was pre-eminently a preacher; and he was little more. His friend and early colleague, John Wesley, was no contemptible rival of Whitefield, even

Something, it was clear, must be done. To stay where he was would, for Charles Edward, be only to court ruin. It was no easy matter for him to induce the clansmen to set out on the road to London. It proved to be still harder, when he had crossed the English border, to waken again in Englishmen the enthusiasm of a generation which had passed away. Scarcely more than one or two gentlemen joined him on his march. The people of Manchester illuminated the streets through which he passed, and gave him two thousand pounds. But this cold comfort was far from counterbalancing tidings which warned him that he was hastening towards the lion's den. Armies far larger than his own were closing round him, and a third army under the king himself covered the capital.

The Southward
March of the
Highland Clans.

Even behind him the outlook was sufficiently gloomy. Some of the clans had refused to rise, and some had risen, not for him, but for king George. Retreat was now as necessary as the advance had been necessary at Edinburgh. Disheartened and dispirited, his men hastened northwards from Derby. Another victory won over the troops of General Hawley at Falkirk, Jan. 23, 1746, only hastened the catastrophe. Many of the clansmen hurried away with their booty to their homes in the mountains. The rest, struggling on to Culloden, found that the Duke of Cumberland was awaiting them at Nairn, some twelve miles distant. In the hope of surprising the English force during the night, they began their march in the evening; but, finding it impossible to reach the camp before daylight, they hastened back across bog and moor, hungry, cold, and tired out, to Culloden, whither the Duke of Cumberland followed them the next day, April 16.

The Retreat
from Derby.

prison discipline of the present day, and went so far towards showing his countrymen generally the real object and nature of punishment.

**The Ministry
of the Pel-
hams. 1743.**

These labours of the Methodists and of the Philanthropists, as they were called, illustrate the life of a people, whose history cannot be understood without taking them into account. But they lie in a direct line removed from the field of political action. The death of Walpole left the way open for the Duke of Newcastle and his brother, Henry Pelham, 1743. From their efforts to secure all men of talent as speakers without reference to the sincerity or the hypocrisy of their professions, their government received the name of the Broad-bottom Administration. It was a witness to the last uprising for the recovery of what was called the lost rights of the House of Stuart.

**The Rebellion of
1745.**

The occupation of the English troops in Flanders and their defeat at Fontenoy, seemed to offer a favorable opportunity for a descent on Scotland, which had been planned for the previous year. But a storm dispersed the formidable fleet then gathered together.



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**The Retreat
from Derby.**

The Battle of
Culloden. 1746.

This time the wild onset of the Highlanders failed of having the effect which had won the victory in the fields of Prestonpans and Falkirk. The English musketry smote down and scattered men who were staggering from fatigue and hunger; and at the close of the day Charles Edward was a solitary fugitive. The Duke of Cumberland, to whom the epithet of "the Butcher" clung for life, took a savage vengeance on those of the mountaineers who were unable to make their escape; but no rewards could induce those to whom Charles Edward intrusted himself to betray him, a prince who appealed only to their feelings of personal loyalty.

Suppression of
the Rebellion.

Three Scottish noblemen, and many more of their followers, paid the penalty of their lives on the scaffold or the gibbet. The feudal rights of the Highland chiefs were transferred to the crown. The Highland dress was proscribed, and a line of fortifications made future risings hopeless. But there was in truth no chance that any such attempt would ever again be made.

It was manifest that England and Scotland were ali-

Seven, after the retreat of the Duke of Cumberland, the conqueror at Culloden.

Pitt was resolved to do all that could be done to support Frederick; and Frederick by his great victory at Rosbach soon recovered more than he had lost. Two years later (1759) the Duke of Brunswick, also an ally of Frederick, won the great battle of Minden against the French, who were also foiled in their design of invading England. A large army was ready to embark for this purpose at the mouth of Quiberon Bay; but, regardless of all danger from rocks and shoals, the English admiral, Hawke, laid his ships alongside those of the enemy's fleet, and dealt on them a crushing defeat (1759).

Pitt and the
King of Prussia.

But it was not in Europe only that England found herself in antagonism with France. In the year 1600, queen Elizabeth granted a charter to the Governor and Company of the Merchants of London trading in the East Indies. They went, as their charter stated, simply for purposes of trade, and for nearly a century and a half their ambition had not risen to anything higher. But the military success of France in Europe led Dupleix, the governor of the French colony of Pondicherry, to form visions of a French empire in India. The great Mogul empire, founded by Baber, 1526, and strengthened by Humayun and his illustrious son Akbar, had become the prey of rapacious viceroys who ruled in their name, and of deputies of the viceroys, who acted under the alleged sanction of the viceroys.

The East India
Company.

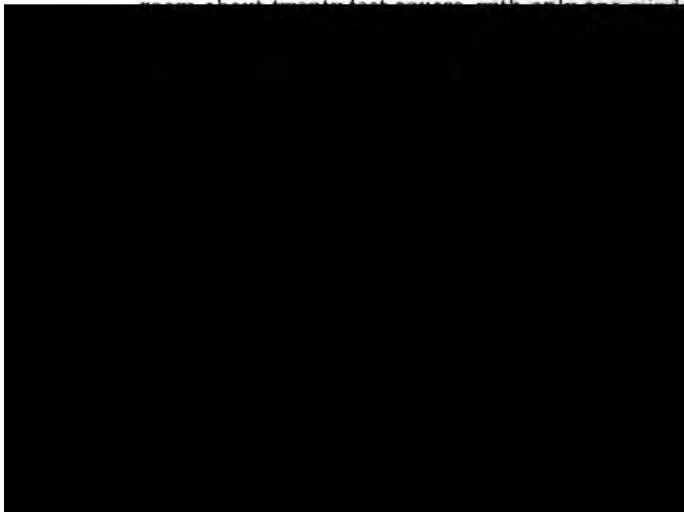
Following their example, Dupleix, in the name of the Mogul emperor, made himself master of the prince who ruled at Hyderabad, and only the town of Trichinopoly stood in the way of the complete execution of his plan. This town was closely invested,

Surprise of Arcot by Clive.
1751.

and its fall was a question only of days, when Robert Clive, the son of a Shropshire country gentleman, surprised the town of Arcot (about seventy miles west of Madras), and compelled the besiegers of Trichinopoly to detach a large portion of their army for relief. Trichinopoly was thus saved, and Clive, having successfully defended Arcot, inflicted two defeats on the French and their allies in the field (1751).

Suraj - u - Daula
and the Black
Hole of Calcutta. 1756.

Five years later, Clive, who had in the interim spent some time in England, was summoned to Bengal by the news of a great disaster. Suraj Daula, nominally a deputy of a Mogul viceroy, but really sovereign of Behar, marched on Calcutta with the purpose of driving the English merchants into the sea. He met with no resistance, and most of the English surrendered under a flag of truce. Assured the prisoners that no harm should befall them, Suraj Daula went to his room to sleep. To disturb him would be death, and his officers said that they could find no other place for the detention of the prisoners than



was staggered by the perils of his task. His council insisted on retreat. For some time he was himself in doubt, but at length he gave the order for fighting. The battle of Plassey was decided in an hour. The Nawab's troops were led by French officers, who alone struggled to maintain their ground when the men under their orders broke and hurried off in headlong flight. The French dream of empire in India was rudely broken, and the English found themselves committed to a career of conquest which has carried their dominion to the mountains of Afghanistan.

The tide of ill success ran as strongly against the French in America as in India. Pitt was resolved that the sovereignty of Northern America should be in English, not in French hands; and the charge to dislodge the latter from their fortresses in Canada was given to General Wolfe, a young officer only thirty-three years old. As able as he was fearless, Wolfe for a time thought that he had been burdened with an impossible task; but at length he managed to get his soldiers up the crags which here rise abruptly from the river St. Lawrence, and drew them up in fighting order before Quebec (1759). In the terrible battle which ensued, the French were defeated. Wolfe and the French general, Montcalm, both fell. Wolfe had gained, Montcalm had lost, an empire; but each deserved well of his country, and the names of both are inscribed on the monument which commemorates their death on the heights of Abraham.

The empire for which they fought was one for which it was well worth while to contend. The population of the American colonies of England was already about one-fourth of the population of England. But there were broad distinctions between the more

Taking of Quebec by Wolfe.
1759.

The British in America.

northern and more southern settlers. The latter cultivating the land chiefly by slave labour, acquired the refined and aristocratic habits of thought and modes of life which characterized the slaveholding democracies of Athens and Rome, while the Puritans of New England were Puritans more thorough and consistent than they could have been in the mother country. But both in the north and in the south there was a strong love of independence, which was not more likely to give way to any attempts at oppression than the spirit which animated the men of old England against the despotism of the Stuart kings.

Accession of
George III.
1760.

The loyalty and forbearance of the American colonies were to be tested by George III., whose father having died in 1751) succeeded his grandfather George II., in 1760.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

THE REIGN OF GEORGE III.



be such, and he was resolute in carrying her precept into practice.

There was much in the circumstances of the time to make his task by comparison easy. The collapse of the Stuart cause at Culloden had gone far towards cooling the personal loyalty of the Jacobites for the dethroned dynasty; and their devotion transferred itself with little effort to the youthful English sovereign, even while they kept up a kindly memory of the brave and high-spirited prince Charles Edward, whose later life was sinking under a dark cloud of moral evil.

Decay of Jacobite Feeling.

The revolution had done much towards cutting down the royal prerogative; but, although no revival of the peculiar theories of Charles I. and his father could be attempted, George III. by no means lacked instruments for the exercise of a widely-extended power. These instruments were the multitude of offices in the army, the church, the court, the government, of which he still retained, or could command, the disposal; and this patronage made him virtually master of the House of Commons, where the place-hunters could generally be expected to turn the scale. With his notions and aims, George could have little liking for the Whigs, and he began his reign with the full purpose of being rid of them.

Extent of the Royal Power.


The removal of Pitt from office left the way open for the Earl of Bute, a man who had no other object than that of doing what the king wished him to do; and the conclusion of the peace of Hubertsburg, which ended the Seven Years' War (p. 436), seemed to leave the king free to carry out his designs without hindrance (1763). The House of Commons had become little more than a puppet in his hands. It had ceased, in fact, to represent the people. A large pro-

Corruption of the House of Commons.

portion of the seats were in the hands of the borough-mongers, as they were called, who were ready to sell them to the highest bidder. Some of the greatest towns in the kingdom, such as Manchester, had no members; and some boroughs, such as Sarum, which had ceased to exist at all, had one or two. As to the choice of members, a small fraction of the people was all that had even nominally any part in it. Out of eight millions, only 160,000 had votes.

The Adminis-
trations of
Bute and Gren-
ville.

With so small a body of electors, the task of bribery and corruption was rendered terribly easy; and bribery and corruption could scarcely be carried to much greater lengths than those which they had now reached. But the nation, as a whole, had not sunk so low as to submit quietly to a state of things so disgraceful. Lord Bute was compelled to resign in 1763, but Pitt refused to take office again unless the whole Whig party should be allowed to share his power. The king at once threw Pitt aside, and put the helm of the state into the hands of George Grenville.



the colonies themselves. The latter protested again, and offered to grant supplies which would yield an amount far greater than that of the proposed tax.

In spite of their protests and offers, the Stamp Act, imposing a payment to England for stamps on all law papers, was passed in 1765. The stamped papers sent to Boston were seized by the magistrates; and Pitt, on hearing this news, expressed his thankfulness that America had resisted, and declared emphatically that England had no right to tax the colonies. Once more he was called on to take the reins of power; but the inroads of disease had greatly impaired his strength, and compelled him to lighten the labours of government by retreating into the House of Peers as Earl of Chatham.

This retirement was perhaps unavoidable, but it was fatal. The old days of his greatness were past. Lord North, a man of no greater independence of character than George Grenville, became head of the Ministry in 1770, and the tables were turned on the methods of Strafford (p. 367) or of Shaftesbury (p. 408). These statesmen had really governed, while the king reigned; but it was George III. who now ruled, while Lord North professed to direct the Government. The result was disastrous indeed.

The obnoxious Stamp Act of 1765 had been repealed in the following year, and the king bitterly regretted what he termed a "fatal compliance." His indignation rose to fever-heat on hearing of a tumult in Boston in 1773. The tea duty had still been retained when others had been withdrawn. The colonists had pledged each other not to use tea imported from England; and on the arrival of some tea-laden ships, they boarded the vessels, tore open the chests, and threw their contents into the harbour.

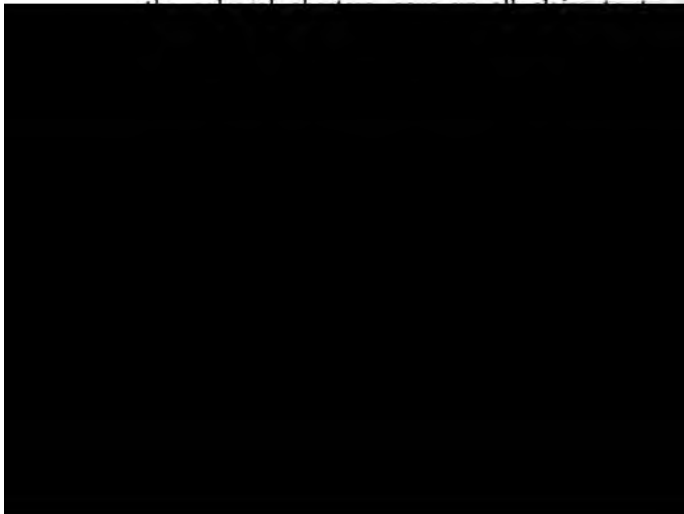
The English government retorted by closing port of Boston: troops were sent out, and commander-in-chief was appointed governor Massachusetts.

The Congress of
Philadelphia.
1774.

"The die is cast," said the king; "the colonies must either triumph or submit." He was quite wrong. His mistake lay in thinking that of the two alternatives they must choose submission. But the colony Massachusetts was now thoroughly roused, and feelings were shared by the other colonies. What had been done here, might be done everywhere. Congress, consisting of delegates from the State legislatures, met at Philadelphia (1774). They spoke with determination; but there was a manifest wish to keep peace, if possible. This desire was especially by George Washington of Virginia, future President of the great American republic.

Wisdom and
Integrity of
Chatham.

It was at this time that Chatham showed his greatness. In conjunction with the American envoy Benjamin Franklin, he drew up a bill which secured



and of right ought to be, free and independent states.

But at first the fortune of war seemed to be utterly opposed to them. The tide turned when Burgoyne was compelled to surrender himself with his troops at Saratoga (Oct. 16, 1777); and Chatham, hearing of the disaster to the English arms, expressed his satisfaction. "If I were an American," he said, "as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms, never, never, never!" Even now he hoped that the severance of the mother country and the colonies might be avoided. He proposed a federal union which should leave the colonies completely free in the management of their internal affairs; and this his last proposal was rejected as contemptuously as those which had gone before it.

Another catastrophe which matched the disaster at Saratoga determined the issue of the war. Lord Cornwallis surrendered his army at York Town in Virginia (Oct. 19, 1781). "It is all over," was Lord North's exclamation on hearing the tidings. The independence of the United States was acknowledged; and England seemed for the moment shorn of half her strength.

But while England was fighting a losing battle in the west, she was gaining a new empire in the east. The mantle of Clive (p. 438) had fallen on Warren Hastings, who was now Governor-General of India. His great task was to carry on the work of Clive, and he accomplished it without any higher advantages of political training than had fallen to the lot of that great leader. Ready to carry out his designs by fair means, if possible, he never stuck at foul ones, when these became in his judgment necessary. He took

the part of Suraj-u-Daula, the Nawab Vizir of Oude, against the chief of the Rohillas; and he did so (although the Rohillas had done him no wrong) because Suraj-u-Daula was willing to pay £400,000 for his aid, in addition to maintaining the English troops during the continuance of the war.

Hastings and
the Rohilla
War. 1773.

The Rohillas, on their side, had besought Hastings not to hurt them, and had offered large ransoms; only they were not so large as the bribes of the Nawab Vizir. When all was vain, the Rohillas defended themselves bravely (1773). The English commander, Colonel Champion, declared that with a good share of military knowledge they displayed a firmness of resolution which it would be impossible to describe. When the battle was decided (and it was decided by the bravery and skill of the English alone), the Nawab let loose his dastardly rabble to plunder, torment, and murder men whom they had not dared to face in the fight. The crops were destroyed, the towns and villages set on fire, the people tortured, mutilated, or sold as slaves.

affect the very existence of the English in India. The armies of Hyder Ali, Raja of Mysore, had burst into the rich plains of the Carnatic. The flames of burning villages might be seen from Madras and Fort St. George. By gifts of money Hastings secured the neutrality of some of the native chiefs, and Sir Eyre Coote was thus enabled to inflict on Hyder a severe defeat at Porto Novo, 1780. But Hastings, who was always ready to bribe, was also always wanting money. The court of directors of the East India Company (p. 437) sent him constantly the most excellent advice for the humane and just government of the country placed under his charge ; but the letters which conveyed this advice always wound up with the order to send them money, more and more money.

Hastings obeyed these orders. Cheyte Sing, the Raja of Benares, had, for aid received against the Nawab of Oude, acknowledged himself a vassal of the English, and agreed to pay a certain annual tribute, under a pledge from Hastings that no further demands should ever be made upon him. Suddenly Hastings demanded an additional sum of £50,000. The demand was repeated in the following year, and both were paid. At last the Raja became restive, and remonstrated. Hastings chose to treat this as rebellion ; and an English force advanced against him. On the flight of Cheyte Sing his territory was incorporated in the British dominions (1775), and the East India Company was the richer by £200,000 a year.

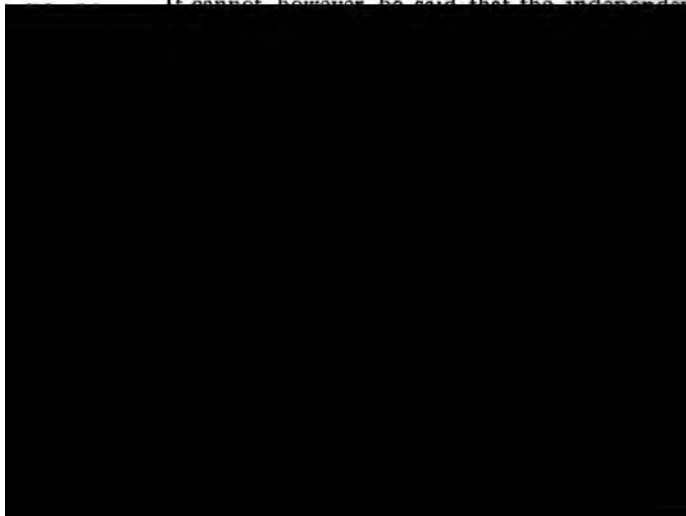
Nor was this all. The Nawab Vizir of Oude was a man horrible in his wastefulness, his vices, and his tyranny. He, too, had asked for the aid of English troops ; but he found the burden of paying them heavy. To his prayer that the troops might be recalled, Hastings returned a flat refusal, adding that

he would come and see him, and that a settlement might be arrived at in an interview. The two men and they agreed to rob two ladies who were called the Begums of Oude. These princesses were supposed to be the possessors of vast wealth, and Hastings agreed that he would take the whole of it as a full discharge for all money due from the Vizir to the Company. The Begums, however, refused to yield, and their resistance was subdued by measures which cannot be thought of without a deep feeling of shame.

spread of Eng-
lish Power in
India.

The history of these events is a terrible one; but each event carried the great company of East India merchants a step onwards on the road towards supremacy over the whole peninsula. Benares had been annexed, Oude was reduced practically to dependence, and the power of Hyder Ali had been shattered. But the conquests of the East India Company were conquests really for England; and they might well be thought to make up, or more than make up, for the losses in America.

It cannot, however, be said that the independence



Commoner," who ended his days as Lord Chatham. He was barely twenty-two years of age when he entered the House of Commons (1781), and almost after his first speech, Charles Fox, the Whig leader, pronounced him to be one of the first men in parliament.

In December 1783 Pitt became first lord of the Treasury. In the following year he introduced his India Bill, which made the president of the East India Company a member of the English ministry, and so responsible to the English people, and recognised the duty of extending to the meanest Hindu the fair and just dealing which was regarded as the birthright of every Englishman.

Pitt and the
East India
Company.

It was the sense of this duty which stirred Edmund Burke to demand the impeachment of Warren Hastings. Gifted with an imagination as rich as that of any orator in any age, Burke failed to see how crimes could be less crimes, because they were committed on a colossal scale, or because they were successful, or because an air of splendour might be thrown over them as steps or stages in a career of magnificent conquest. He pulled to pieces the conduct of the great Proconsul, and showed the iniquity which tarnished his most splendid services, and ran through his dealings with the Rohillas, with Nundkomar, with the Raja of Benares, and with the Begums of Oude. The trial of Hastings gave occasion to a display of the most astonishing eloquence. It was protracted for years (1786-95), and it ended in his acquittal. But the purpose for which his accusers struggled was none the less attained. No attempt was ever made by the successors of Warren Hastings to imitate him in his acts of injustice and oppression.

Impeachment of
Warren Has-
tings. 1786-
95.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

THE REIGN OF GEORGE III. (*continued*).*England and the French Revolution.*Policy of Wil-
liam Pitt.

As the greatness of his father lay chiefly in his resolute claims of justice for the American colonies, so the greatness of William Pitt lay chiefly in the clearness with which he discerned the true interests of England and the steadiness with which he clung to them, even when he was left standing almost alone. He saw that the industrial activity of the age, if allowed full scope, would soon achieve triumphs which would change the face of the world, and that for this end one indispensable condition was the maintenance of peace, so long as it could be maintained without disgrace or wrong.

Canal Naviga-
tion.

The work of the farmer was being carried on with greater skill and with some attempts at scientific method. The need of less costly carriage had so

processes very slow. The first attempts to improve this state of things were met by violent opposition. For inventing his spinning-jenny for twisting cotton into thread, Hargreaves had to fly from a furious mob, who could not be made to understand that lessened prices would bring forward more purchasers, and that an extended market would need more hands to supply it. For making a spinning machine of a better kind, Arkwright had his mill burnt down. Crompton, the inventor of the mule for weaving, fared little better; and from lack of means to buy a patent, his discoveries brought him next to no profit.

The steam-engine had been thus far chiefly a curious toy; and when the first efforts were made to apply it to practical purposes, the cost of fuel seemed to be a fatal obstacle. This difficulty was at length overcome by James Watt of Glasgow; and the most potent instrument, thus far shaped by human hands, was ready to begin its wonderful work. Its powers were soon shown in the great coalfields of the northern counties. Not only was the face of the land changed, but the social and political balance of the country was changed also.

James Watt
and the Steam
Engine.

The harrying of the north (p. 165) by William the Conqueror had left Northumbria a waste howling wilderness, and it remained a desolate and stricken region for centuries. New ideas and new wants had thus far travelled from south to north, and in many cases had met with no warm welcome. The social inferiority and political insignificance resulting from this cause passed away almost as by the waving of a magician's wand. Mighty towns rose up, it might seem in a day, and the keen practical intellect of the population so far left the south behind as to give

Changes in the
Condition of
the North of
England.

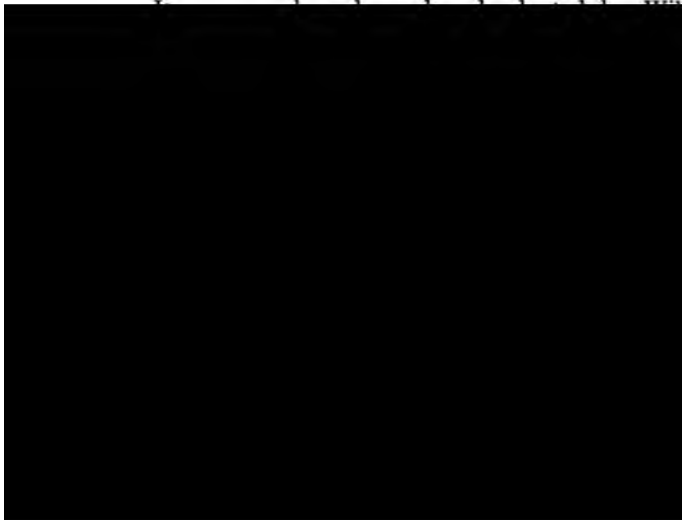
occasion for the saying that what Lancashire thought to-day will be the thought of all England to-morrow.

Political Economy of Adam Smith.

The conclusions which Pitt drew from these changes in the aspect and character of national industry were vastly strengthened by the reason of Adam Smith, professor of Logic and of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow. In his "Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" (1776) this great thinker laid down, and proved by the most ample and conclusive evidence, that the true source of this wealth lay in labour, and not in money or land. But labour must be free, and must be allowed to seek its own ends in its own fashion. Attempts to interfere with its self-adjusting action, or to divert it into artificial channels, by means of permissive or prohibitory laws, could end only in mischief, perhaps in dire disaster.

Pitt as a Financier.

Adam Smith's reasoning developed into a consistent system the notions which commended themselves to the sound judgment and common sense of Walpole.



mind on the subject. They could do this only through their representatives, and this brought Pitt at once to the question of parliamentary reform.

Something had been already done towards remedying the worst evils in the existing condition of things; and Pitt in 1785 proposed a large disfranchisement of decayed boroughs (p. 442) in a measure which insured the gradual extinction of all of them. But here, too, he was foiled; and the bill was withdrawn.

Pitt's Reform
Bill. 1785.

Still, some progress was made by his Treaty of Commerce with France, carried two years later; and the spirit which cannot rest contented without seeking remedies for gross wrongs was fostered by the impeachment of Warren Hastings, and by an attack made on the monster evil of slavery.

Pitt's Treaty of
Commerce with
France. 1787.

The traffic in negroes stolen away from Africa was counted at the peace of Utrecht (1713) among the sources of British wealth. It was from a conversation with Pitt that his friend William Wilberforce was encouraged to bring forward a bill for the abolition of this infamous trade. The bill was defeated (1788) by the influence of the slave merchants of Liverpool, who had succeeded to the miserable pre-eminence of the slave merchants of Bristol (pp. 102, 124).

The Slave
Trade.

But Pitt was now to contend with more tremendous forces than any which for the moment were at work in England. For generations, if not for centuries, France had been governed as badly as any country can well be governed. The king had put down the nobles, and ruled by his own arbitrary will; but the nobles trampled on their tenantry, and the tenantry struggled through life without sympathy and without hope. The nobles existed as a separate order. The blood of their families was, as the phrase went, ennobled; and a state of things was brought about,

Condition of
France. o

which in this country is, and always has been utterly unknown.

the French
Nobility and
the French
People.

Freed from all share in the burden of taxation, the French nobles grew rich on the forced and unpaid labours of the peasantry, who lay absolutely at their mercy. For the State as well as for themselves, the life-long toil of the country folk was practically unfruitful; and the trading classes had to make up so far as they could, for the deficiencies of the royal revenue. But their powers of giving fell far short of what was wanted even for the most necessary expenses of government; and the king, sinking deeper and deeper into debt, found himself compelled, like Charles I., to face a parliament, or, as it was termed, the Assembly of the States-General.

Meeting of the
French States-
General. 1789.

This council met in 1789, with a temper not unlike that of the Long Parliament at Westminster in 1640. If, however, the States-General were in earnest, the people were more than earnest. A furious multitude attacked the Bastille, the tremendous stronghold



same things had been done in their own land, and they now professed to be shocked at the sight of a nation rising up against their sovereign, sentencing him to death, and executing him on a scaffold (1793).

The excesses of the French revolution had the most powerful effect on the mind of Edmund Burke, the great accuser of Warren Hastings. Burke had been brought up and lived in times when the worst dangers which had threatened English freedom had altogether passed away; and in the well-balanced machinery of the English constitution he saw a contrivance so complex and so delicate, so strong, yet so sensitive, that to touch it would be sacrilege. From this conviction, of the soundness of which he had no misgiving, he rushed to the conclusion that that which was sacrilege here must be sacrilege in France also, forgetting that the despotism of the Grand Monarch, Louis XIV. (p. 425), had left to that miserable country neither freedom nor constitution.

Burke on the
French Revolution.

Still, in the terrible upheaval which brought to the front men like Robespierre, Danton, and Marat, Burke saw the prelude to universal anarchy, and, in opposition to the French reign of terror which sent its multitudes to the guillotine, he strove to rouse a terror of another sort. "Be alarmists; diffuse terror," he wrote to the French princes, who, having fled from their country, sought to find their way back by force. The fall of the Old Order (*Ancien Régime*), as it is called, seemed to have blinded him to all its faults; in the new he saw nothing but tokens, written in flame, of desolation, mourning, and woe.

The Reign of
Terror.


Against an opposition which seemed to him rash and unwarranted, Pitt clung still to his policy of peace. He did not see that it was the duty of England to interfere in the internal concerns of France,

Attitude of Pitt
towards the
French Revolution.

unless he admitted, which he could not admit, that Louis XIV. would have been justified in interfering, at the close of the civil war or Great Rebellion, in the internal concerns of England. In both countries, after the contest had reached a certain point, the bounds of legality were passed. Charles I. was not brought to the bar of the English Parliament, for the parliament had ceased to exist, and no appeal was made to the people. Louis XVI. could not appear before the tribunal of his subjects, for his subjects, apart from a small faction, had no voice in the matter. But these evils, frightful as they were, would not, Pitt contended, be lessened by foreign interference. Despotism would take its course, as it did, through the Commune and the Directory, to the iron tyranny of Napoleon Bonaparte.

French Designs
on Holland.

But Pitt had never declared himself an advocate of peace at any price and under any conditions. He had only expressed his longing to keep the peace while he could do so without disgrace. His opposition to war was withdrawn, when the French resolved to attack Holland, in spite of treaties signed only two



to enter the walls of Toulon. In a few months this garrison was driven out by Napoleon Bonaparte, a young Corsican, who was now an officer in the French artillery. The death of Robespierre put an end to the drunken fury of Jacobinism, and the milder sway of the Directory brought the main part of the French people together for the common defence of their country.

At first England fought rather with money than with men. Her army was insignificant in numbers, and it wholly lacked competent generals. But she could subsidise the enemies of France, and in the process the national debt was enormously increased. Pitt still hoped that a war which was to last for twenty years might be speedily brought to an end. He made some attempts at negotiation; but his efforts were foiled by Burke, who published his "Letters on a Regicide Peace" (1796), denouncing the iniquity which would come to terms with a people who had cut off the head of their king. In the following year (1797) Burke died, and he died condemning the attempt which Pitt was yet again making to bring the struggle to a close.

Burke's "Letters
on a Regicide
Peace." 1796.

The French threatened to invade England, and Pitt once more had to face the realities of war. The English arms were now winning victories both by land and sea. Lord Howe shattered the French fleet opposed to him in the battle of the 1st of June, 1794; and in 1797 Admiral Duncan, in a battle off Camperdown, destroyed the Dutch fleet, which was then in French hands, and which was designed to cover a descent on Ireland. The triumphant career of Napoleon Bonaparte in Italy and Egypt was checked by Admiral Nelson, who attacked his fleet in Aboukir Bay, destroying or taking eleven out of thirteen vessels (1798).

Victories of
Howe, Duncan,
and Nelson.

he Irish Par-
liament and
the Irish
People.

But there yet remained other work for Pitt to do. The condition of Ireland might well be regarded with feelings of the gravest anxiety and humiliation. Her so-called independence was a mockery ; and the debates of the Irish parliament were either a farce or a tragedy. The members were returned by a small body of "undertakers," men belonging to a few noble families ; and the House so packed refused contemptuously to consider the grievances of Presbyterians or of Roman Catholics. The country was sunk in poverty, and this poverty had been caused at the outset by the exclusion of Irish products from the ports and markets of England.

he Irish Rebel-
lion. 1798.

At last the wretched people rose in rebellion (1798) and they requited on their antagonists the horrid cruelties in which they had been indulging with impunity. The revolt was soon crushed in a terrible defeat on Vinegar Hill. With the ferocity of the Irish Presbyterians Pitt's disgust was so great that he resolved to bring their so-called independence abruptly to an end.



This civil inequality depended on the religious inequality set up by the Test Act. Pitt proposed to do away with all religious tests for civil and military offices, exacting in their place an oath of fidelity to the Constitution ; but in the teeth of the legal opinions which he obtained, George III. insisted that his coronation oath bound him to uphold all tests, and, as Pitt on his side insisted on their removal, no alternative was left to him. He resigned office (Feb. 1801), and Mr. Addington, a man as narrow-minded and obstinate as the king, took his place.

Resignation of
Pitt, 1801.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

THE REIGN OF GEORGE III. (*continued*).

England and the French Empire.

THE peace of Amiens, concluded in 1802, proved to be merely a breathing time in a struggle which was never really interrupted. Once embarked on a career, to which it seemed that no limits could be placed, Bonaparte had no sooner secured his power as First Consul for life, than he set himself to the task of bringing all Europe under his feet. His greatest enemy was England ; and he resolved that his first great blow should be directed against her.

Bonaparte's
Hatred of
England.

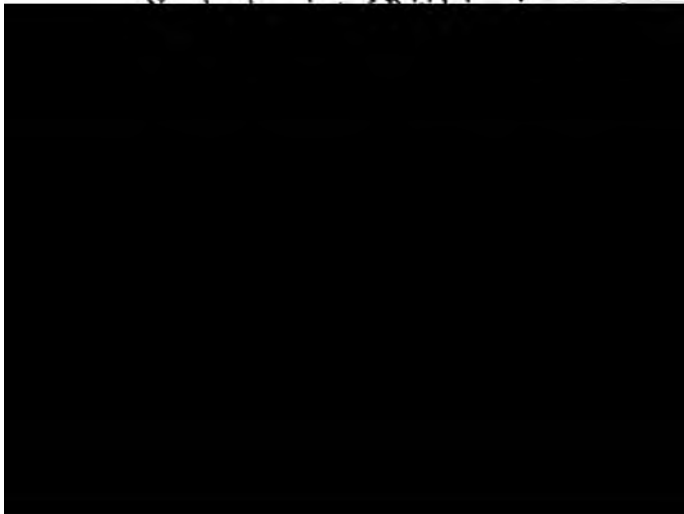
A hundred thousand men were gathered for the invasion in the camp at Boulogne ; the flat-bottomed vessels which were to transport them across the Channel were all ready. It remained only to bring up the fleet which must protect the transit. In 1804, Napoleon visited the camp, and declared that the

His Proposed
Invasion of
England, 1804.

French would be masters of the world if they could be masters of the Channel for six hours only. The alliance with Spain seemed to make this almost a matter of certainty. The French admiral, Villeneuve, was ordered to decoy Nelson to the West Indies, and then, giving him the slip, to return and hasten with the Spanish fleet to guard the invaders as they crossed from Boulogne.

**Victory and
Death of
Nelson at Tra-
falgar. 1805.**

The orders of Napoleon, who was now emperor of the French, were zealously obeyed; and they might have been crowned with success if Nelson had been less speedy in his movements. But Villeneuve with the Spanish fleet could not reach Cape St. Vincent, where Admiral Jervis had won a splendid victory in 1797, Nelson had overtaken them in the bay of Trafalgar. Nelson fell in the battle which he had, as it is said, invited every man in the fleet, in the name of England, to do his duty; but he fell in a moment of magnificent success (1805). The French and Spanish fleets were almost annihilated.



His place was taken by Charles Fox, whose resolution to defend England at all costs was as firm as that of his predecessor ; but he survived his friend for a few months only, dying shortly before the day which saw Germany laid prostrate under the feet of Napoleon on the field of Jena (Oct. 14). The struggle between England and the French emperor was becoming more and more bitter.

Death of Fox.
1806.

The former declared all the coasts occupied by the French to be under blockade ; the latter retorted by excluding all British commerce from the Continent. To counteract the ruin which this exclusion threatened to the carrying trade of Great Britain, the English Government issued orders that all vessels going to the coasts said to be under blockade should on their way touch at some British port. They would thus come under Napoleon's ban, as conveyors of British goods.

**The Continental
System of Na-
poleon Bona-
parte.**

Happily for the country, the ministry which succeeded that of Fox and Grenville was guided chiefly by George Canning, a zealous disciple of William Pitt. It was popularly known as the Ministry of all the talents. As to the duty of carrying on the war vigorously he never had the faintest misgivings. With the Russian emperor, over whom he seems to have cast a spell, Napoleon had made a treaty of peace at Tilsit (1807), and with him he had also formed a plan for crippling England at sea by means of the Danish fleet.

**Ministry of
George Can-
ning. 1807.**

This plan was disconcerted by the appearance of an English fleet off Elsinore, and by a demand for the surrender of the Danish navy, under promise of its restoration at the end of the war. The refusal of the Danes was followed by the bombardment of Copenhagen (1807), and the carrying away of the Danish ships into British harbours.

**Bombardment
of Copenhagen.
1807.**

**The Bonaparte
Tyrants and
Usurpers.**

But while something was thus done to curb power of Napoleon by sea, his progress on land seemed to be irresistible. Over western Europe was supreme. His brothers, Louis, Jerome, Joseph, were set up by him as kings of Holland, Westphalia, and Spain. Prussia was held down by French troops, and Italy became a province of the French empire.

**Operations of
Bonaparte in
Spain. 1808.**

For the Spanish king Napoleon professed feeling of friendship, and with him he drew up an agreement for the partition of Portugal. The flight of the king from Lisbon to Brazil left Portugal at their mercy, and, having thus seized his prey, Napoleon entered the Spanish monarch and his son Ferdinand at Bayonne, where he compelled them to resign, the one his crown, the other his claims to the crown, while a French army, marching to Madrid, transferred the crown to his brother Joseph (1808).

**The Battles of
Vimiera, 1808,
and Corunna,
1809.**

Napoleon had made a blunder. He had placed Joseph on a bed of thorns; and while he thought that he was merely dethroning a dynasty, he

England. But Canning was not discouraged, and Sir Arthur Wellesley was wholly unmoved. The struggle soon assumed huge proportions. The French underwent a terrible defeat at Talavera (July 27, 1809); but after it Soult drove Wellesley, who had been made Lord Wellington for his success at Talavera, back upon Badajoz, while Austria was laid prostrate by Napoleon's victory at Wagram. Ill luck also attended an expedition sent to attack Antwerp, under Lord Chatham, the elder brother of William Pitt. Instead of sailing straight to Antwerp, the troops were landed on the island of Walcheren, where they were thinned by fever. In the meantime the fortifications were so strengthened as to bid defiance to their attacks; and Chatham finally returned to England without having done anything.

These misfortunes led to changes in the English ministry. But although Spencer Perceval, who was placed at the head of the government, was a man of little ability, he was as resolute as any of his predecessors in carrying on the war. There was need of all his energy. Napoleon was putting forth his full strength, and making mighty efforts to crush all resistance on the Spanish peninsula. So great was the discouragement in England, that many insisted on the abandonment of a hopeless cause; and even Perceval threw on the English commander in Spain the responsibility of maintaining the contest.

Administration
of Perceval.
1809.

Wellington undertook it cheerfully, "The honour and interest of our country," he said, "require that we should hold our ground here as long as possible; and please God I will keep it as long as I can." He was, in fact, ready for the worst that might befall him. He knew that the tyranny of Napoleon was making itself felt most heavily by the poor throughout Europe,

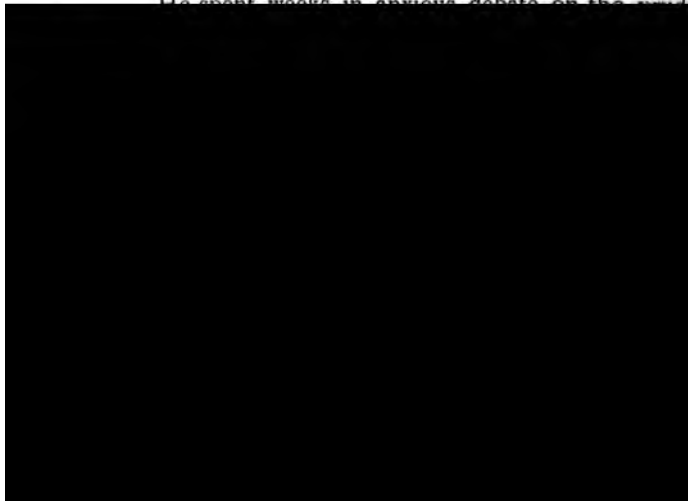
Plans of Lord
Wellington.

and that the French emperor was stirring up an inter of hatred which would sooner or later bring about destruction. But before the end could be reached there might be many alternations of victory and defeat, and it might become necessary to transfer the centre of resistance from the peninsula to some other quarter. The safe retreat of the English troops must therefore be provided for, and the port of Lisbon needed only to be well defended to answer this purpose perfectly.

**The Lines of
Torres Vedras.
1809, 1810.**

Wellington therefore threw up three lines of defences, stretching from the Tagus to the mountains (the famous lines of Torres Vedras towers), a village near which they passed. Finding that Wellesley was in retreat, the French general, Masséna, pushed on after him, in full confidence that he should drive the British in tumult to their ships. To his astonishment he found himself confronted by a series of fortifications, and, having entered it, was still more surprised to see a second and more formidable line.

He spent weeks in anxious debate on the subject.



nation were fixed on the shifting scenes of the great drama, in which all Europe was the stage.

Nor for England was the interest or the anxiety confined to Europe. The Continental system of Napoleon had created great irritation in the United States against England; and when the English Government at last made the concessions demanded of them, they came too late. The United States had already declared war. The war brought neither profit nor glory to either side. There were invasions of Canada; and there was at last an English invasion of United States territory, in which General Ross captured Washington, and burnt its public buildings (1814). The whole strife had no other basis than a commercial dispute, and it was ended after a fashion which implied that both sides looked on it with feelings rather of shame than of satisfaction.

War between
the United
States and
England, 1812.

Meanwhile Napoleon, in his insatiable thirst for conquest, had been hurrying on the road to ruin. The strange friendship of the Russian Czar for the French despot had given way to anger and dislike, and finally to indignation, when Napoleon forbade him to have any commercial dealings with Great Britain. The threatenings of war between France and Russia strengthened the hands of Wellington in the peninsula. While Napoleon was making his way across Poland, Wellington was advancing on Madrid. A little later, the English were compelled to raise the siege of Burgos, and fall back on the Portuguese frontier. But at the very time of this comparatively unimportant reverse, the grand army of the French began that march from Moscow, which forms one of the most appalling chapters in the annals of ancient or modern warfare.


Invasion of
Russia by
Bonaparte.
1812.

**The Retreat
from Moscow.
1812.**

Summer was almost verging upon autumn w
Bonaparte reached the old capital of Russia. H
he hoped either to receive the submission of the C
or to find ample shelter for his troops from
piercing cold of a Russian winter. To his amaze
fires broke out simultaneously in various quarter
the city. The work of extinguishing them
attempted in vain ; and the great conflagration
the French houseless, as they had already been
almost without food. The necessary result follow
Men half-starved were overtaken by Russian frost
snow, when their weary homeward march was l
more than begun. For every thousand slain in
bloodiest of battles the Russian winter slew its
thousand ; and of the magnificent army which
invaded Russia not more than one in twenty live
recross its borders.

**Restoration of
the Bourbon
Dynasty in
France. 1814.**

But on Napoleon himself disasters had no ef
His armaments were eating out the mature man
of France ; but he had no scruple in drawing or



his tiny army; but really he was surveying anxiously the whole political horizon, and calculating his chances in a final effort for the recovery of his power.

On the 1st of March 1815 he was again on French soil. The retinue of a thousand guards, with which he left Cannes, swelled to something like the proportions of his old grand army before he entered the gates of Paris, and began his brief reign of the Hundred Days. They were to be days of the fiercest turmoil. Whether it would have been possible for him to surmount the difficulties which he must have encountered at home, we can scarcely venture to say; but no opportunity was given for the solving of this problem.

The Hundred Days. 1815.

The patience of Europe was exhausted, and the Allied Powers unanimously put him under the ban, solemnly declaring that "in breaking the convention which had established him in the island of Elba, Bonaparte has destroyed the sole legal title to which his political existence is attached. By reappearing in France with projects of trouble and overthrow, he has made it evident that there can no longer be peace or truce with him. The Powers therefore declare that, as the general enemy of the world, he is abandoned to public justice."

Bonaparte under the Ban of Europe.

The great struggle was now drawing to a close. The efforts made on both sides were gigantic. The soldiers who had fought with the Duke of Wellington in Spain, and whom he could, as he said, lead anywhere, were for the most part in America, and so rapid was the course of events that they could not be brought back in time. But England provided eleven millions in money, and sent forty thousand men to serve with the raw levies to be gathered from Hanover and Belgium under the English flag.

Share of Great Britain in the Final Struggle.

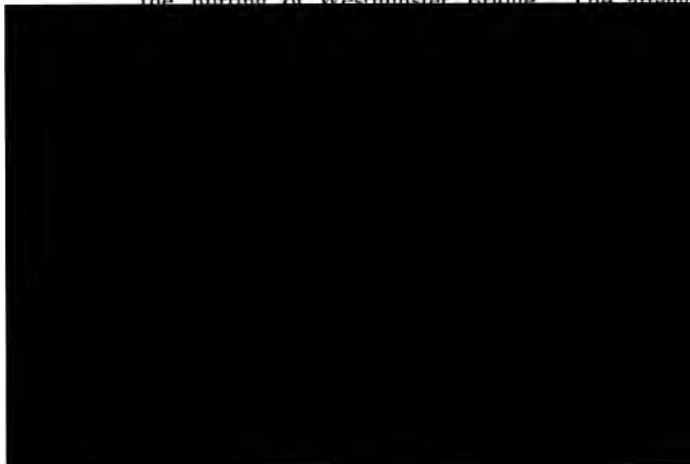
unequally distributed, and the poor were not benefited at all. The farmer, the landowner, and the capitalist all profited from the high price of wheat. Lancashire acquired an exorbitant value. The manufacturers of Lancashire, whose consumption of raw cotton ran from fifty to a hundred millions of pounds, grew wealthy from a trade which was practically confined to themselves.

**increase of
Poverty and
of Crime.**

But the rapid increase of population kept down the rate of wages ; and the multiplication of improved machinery depressed the inferior trades which followed the older and ruder methods. Events seemed likely to bring on a war of classes ; and the Luddite or machine - breaking riots of 1811 in no way lessened the impoverishment which now and for many coming years was accompanied by a great increase of crime.

**severities of the
Criminal Law.**

These evils were intensified by the savage severity of the criminal law (p. 431). Not less than two hundred offences were punishable by hanging ; and among these were the stealing of fish from ponds and the burning of Westminster Bridge. The attempt



The steady opposition of the House of Lords to measures framed in the interests of the working classes, turned attention to the general subject of the constitution of parliament. The conclusion of those who derived no profit from the existing state of things was, that there was no real representation of the English people. True popular representatives, it was argued, would never sit patiently while there were grievous wrongs to be redressed ; and the conclusion was that a reformed parliament was the true remedy for the evils under which the nation was suffering.

**The Constitu-
tion of Parlia-
ment.**

The present electorate was felt to be a monstrous farce, with a dark side which made it the deepest tragedy. It might be regarded as a light jest, that members should be returned to parliament whose boroughs were mere ruined walls in a park, or were even under the sea ; but the ascendancy which was propped up by such a system was felt to be an intolerable burden. Still, great as the evils were, the fear of the risks involved in change were greater. The bugbear of the French revolution pressed like an incubus on the minds of the powerful and the wealthy ; and the inference seemed to be that a good political constitution should not be improved, because an utterly bad one had been swept away in a torrent of blood.

Its Evils.

Reasoning such as this failed to commend itself to the people of Manchester, who resolved to hold a large meeting in St. Peter's Field, to make known their convictions on the subject. The Government expected something more than riot ; and they believed that a popular orator named Hunt, who was to address them, was prepared to hurry them into downright rebellion. A force of yeomanry sent to arrest


**The Manchester
Massacre. 1819.**

him in the crowd, finding their progress hindered by the throng, began to strike with their swords. Six of the crowd were slain, many were wounded; and the Manchester Massacre of 1819 did more to stir the mind of the nation than a whole session of debates in the House of Commons. The law had not been broken, and, indeed, at the moment no offence whatever had been committed; and the general impression remained, that not only the magistrates who sent the yeomanry, but the Government which justified the action of the magistrates, were guilty of a great wrong, and that such a state of things should not be suffered to go on.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

THE REIGN OF GEORGE IV.

union of It was at this stage in the agitation for reform, that the
George IV.



question of his wife's guilt or innocence was set aside as one of secondary importance in comparison with the treatment which, during a long course of years, she had received from a man as cruel as he was vicious.

It can scarcely be said that the Cato Street Conspiracy, although it was framed not long after the Manchester Massacre, could be taken as a fair test of the state of feeling in any class of the people. In times of excitement or of oppression, there have never been wanting a few who see in violence the only effectual remedy for wrong; and the crime of Arthur Thistlewood and his accomplices has scarcely the merit of originality. His design of murdering all the Ministers at a cabinet dinner has a suspicious likeness to the plan of Guy Fawkes and his associates for blowing up king James I. and the parliament.

The Cato Street
Conspiracy.
1820.

Such schemes, as political forces, count for little or for nothing. A nation never grows by leaps; and this truth was very clearly shown by the course of the movement for reform. Cries for universal suffrage, and for other changes involved in this demand, had been already heard; but they met with no effectual response. To give votes to those who were hopelessly incompetent to use them, or even to those who might not fairly be expected to make a right use of them, would be not less absurd than wrong.

Question of the
Suffrage.

But the actual steps taken might seem to us now almost ludicrously small, if we forget or put out of sight the effects of the great revulsion produced by the reactionary eloquence of Edmund Burke. Even such a man as George Canning, who became Foreign Secretary in 1822, thought that the effect of parliamentary reform would be to lower the intellectual and administrative ability of the House of Commons;

Effects of the
Arguments of
Burke.

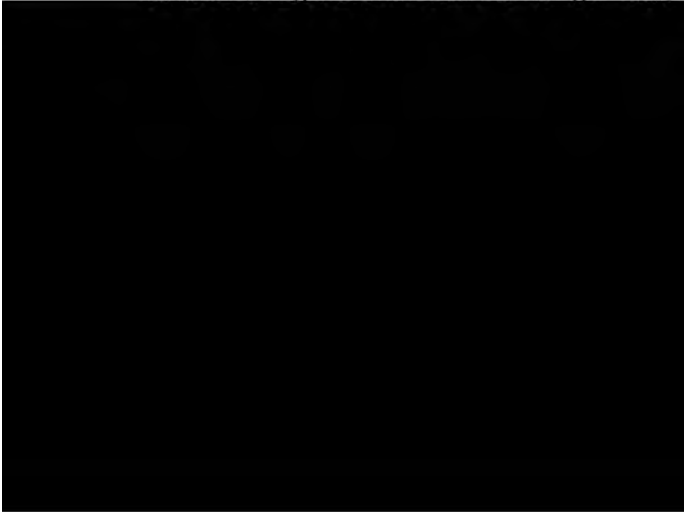
and Robert Peel, who about the same time became Home Secretary, could not bring himself to believe that mischief to a state is the natural result of restrictions of trade. It was, however, reserved for to follow, in the reign of queen Victoria, the example set by Mr. Huskisson in that of George IV.

**The Catholic
Association of
Ireland.**

But if Canning was afraid of parliamentary reform he was not afraid of redressing the personal wrongs of any class of the people. The Catholic Association of Ireland, under the guidance of Daniel O'Connell, sought to do away the legal disabilities which prevented Roman Catholics from sitting in parliament or holding public offices. Canning insisted that demand was just, and that it ought to be conceded; but the House of Lords was inflexible in refusing, and the question was shelved for the time.

**Parliamentary
Career of Lord
John Russell.**

The question of parliamentary reform was at once brought up again by Lord John Russell, who, at the close of a long political career, obtained the disfranchisement of a single Cornish town or village. The



interference, and he made it known to the Greeks, who had risen against the execrable tyranny of the Turkish sultan, that in him they had a well-wisher to their cause, although his hands were tied by the association of European sovereigns, who condemned them as dangerous rebels against a divinely-appointed order. The sultan poured an Egyptian army into the Peloponnesus or Morea, with the avowed purpose of exterminating those who dared to dispute his authority; and Ibrahim Pacha, in defying the admirals of the English, French, and Russian war-ships then present on the coast, provoked a contest which ended in the destruction of the Turkish fleet in the bay of Navarino (Oct. 18, 1827). The yoke of the oppressor was broken, and one more nation was added to the number of the free communities of Europe.

In England the notions of forbearance and toleration were making way. Under the premiership (1828-29) of the Duke of Wellington, Lord John Russell took up the cause of the Dissenters, and carried the removal of the disabilities imposed upon them by the penal enactments of the reign of Charles II. But, by a strange process of reasoning, it was thought by many that a wrong which ought not to be done to Dissenters might be justly done to Papists, or rather, that to them it was no wrong at all. In Ireland, the Papists, who could now vote at elections, began to vote for Papists. In the county of Clare they elected O'Connell; and it was clear that, on a dissolution of parliament, other Papists would be elected for other constituencies.

To keep the members so chosen out of the House would be a dangerous course, which might possibly lead to civil war, or to massacre. The only means


Remo
Relig
abilit

Catholi
cipat

of avoiding this danger was by timely concession a righteous claim. This claim was conceded, and was conceded by the Duke of Wellington, the head of a Tory Ministry, and carried by him with the aid of the Whigs, in 1829. It was a great step forward in the path of justice, tolerance, and equity, and was taken mainly through the energy and resolution of the premier, to the great confusion of his party, and in the teeth of national prejudices. If the Reform Bill preceded this most necessary and judicious measure, there is little doubt that it would not have become law. It was well for the kingdom that the Duke of Wellington saw the dangers of such a course, and resolved, if it were possible, to avoid them.

**The Second
French Revolution.
1830.**

His foresight, however, went no further. Another revolution in France hurled Charles X. from the throne, and placed on it Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, under the title of the king of the French (1830). The old Bourbon theory of hereditary right was as completely scattered to the winds as the Stuart theory of divine right had been scattered



CHAPTER LXXXIX.

THE REIGN OF WILLIAM IV.

THE inglorious life of George IV. had come to an end (1830); and his brother and successor, William IV. (Duke of Clarence, and Lord High Admiral of England), was willing to give his sanction to a measure of reform. The resistance of the Duke of Wellington rendered his resignation inevitable. Once more, after an interval of twenty years, a Whig ministry came into power under Earl Grey. A bill was at once laid before the House of Commons, disfranchising sixty small boroughs, and depriving of one member forty-six boroughs which had thus far returned two. The seats thus gained, 142 in number, were distributed amongst the counties and the great towns,—a few being given to Scotland and Ireland,—the result of the measure being to make the middle classes the preponderant power in the State.

The Reform
Bills. 1831.

The bill was thrown out by a majority of one only, and the Ministry resolved to appeal to the people. A similar bill, having passed the Lower House in the new parliament by an enormous majority, was rejected by the House of Lords. The excitement of the people threatened the disturbance of the public peace. There was rioting at Birmingham and a conflagration at Bristol. But the Ministry stood firm to their purpose. A young member of the Commons, Macaulay, the future historian of the reigns of James II. and William III., besought the House to imitate the example of Richard II., and come forward as leaders of the people, assuring them that the lawful power of parliament should be exerted to the utmost in their cause.

Rejection of the
Bills by the
House of Lords

Passing of the
Third Bill 1831.

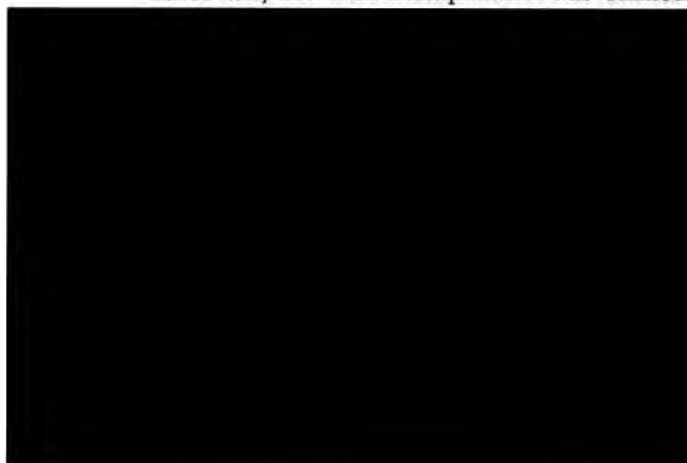
A third bill, much the same in character as the rejected measure, was carried through the House and sent up to the Lords. It was known that the king was ready to swamp their House by the creation of new peers favourable to the measure; and not a few of the Lords, convinced that they had carried resistance to the utmost limit consistent with safety, refrained from voting. The bill became law (Sept. 1831), and another stage was reached in the political growth of the British nation.

Liberals and
Conservatives

With the change in the material conditions of the people came a change in the names of political parties. The distinction of Whigs and Tories gave way to the now more familiar and perhaps more intelligible titles of Liberals and Conservatives. The former were to claim as their special task the removal of long-established wrongs or abuses, though they had enough on their hands to occupy their time.

The Abolition of
Slavery.

The abolition of the slave trade (453) had freed the nation from complicity in a traffic diabolically cruel; but the slaves in our foreign possessions remained slaves still, and their multiplication was ominous.



financial considerations, but for the eternal law which determines the distinctions between right and wrong.

The growth of poverty at home was an evil scarcely less pressing than the extension of slavery abroad. The poor law of queen Elizabeth (p. 349) had led to the growth of a system which seemed to foster pauperism instead of repressing it. The new Poor Law of 1834 was introduced as an effectual remedy for all the grievances complained of under the old law. How far it has proved to be such is still a matter of dispute and of opinion; but it may be safely said that there is yet plenty of room for improvements, which can spring only from a desire to be kind and merciful, and that some of these improvements are very urgently needed.

The Poor Law.
1834.

The immediate effects of the great struggle with Napoleon had now passed away. The acuteness of distress which had stirred very bitter feelings in the minds of working men was now perhaps nowhere felt. There was, in truth, a wonderful activity everywhere; and even the ravages of the terrible disease called cholera, which burst on the country in 1831, failed to interrupt it. Canals had been made to do what roads could not do effectually. Roads ceased to be mere tracks along which vehicles of the rudest sort could hardly pass; and coaches on the improved roads had begun to bring the several parts of the country nearer together.

Improvements
in the Condi-
tion of the
Country.

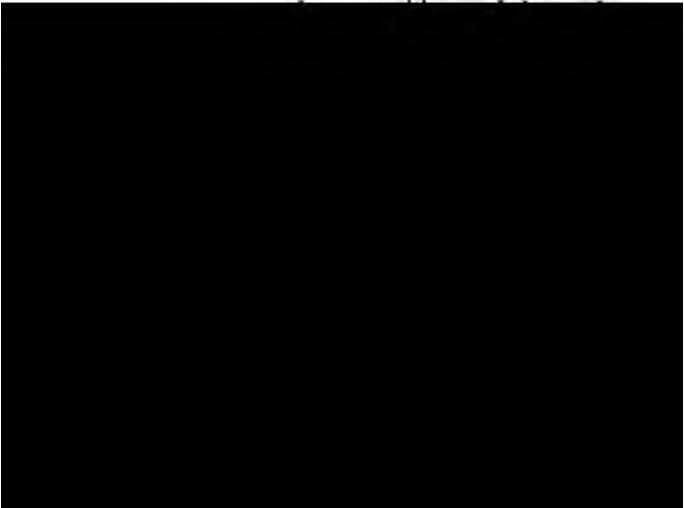
But the thought which impelled Hargreaves, Arkwright, Crompton, and Watt to their discoveries was still at work, and now felt itself to have done little more than start on its astonishing career. It was found that the steam engine, which answered mighty purposes standing still, might answer purposes

The Locomotive
Steam Engine.

mightier yet if the steam could be made to move wheels. The problem was solved by George Stephenson and by other engineers scarcely less illustrious. The railway which joined Liverpool and Manchester (1830) was the first of a multitude of lines which have been given to the maps of Great Britain and of the other chief countries of the world an appearance of a curiously intricate network. Nor can it be necessary to remind any one at the present day that the application of steam to locomotion is but one of a crowd of discoveries, each one of which seems to point the way to the discovery of further wonders beyond.

growing Wealth
of the Country.

All these discoveries became sources of wealth and the accumulation of money led to fresh enterprise and the employment and enrichment of thousands. But to give these influences full scope it was necessary to bring the political machinery of the kingdom into the best working order. The Parliamentary Reform Bill had been an attempt in this direction for the House of Commons; but the se-



William IV. was in his sixty-fifth year when he succeeded his brother. He had therefore more than completed his threescore and ten years when he died, in June 1837, leaving behind him, to say the least, a reputation more creditable than that of George IV., even if we set aside as somewhat exaggerated the eulogy passed on him by Lord Grey.

Death of William IV. June 1837.

CHAPTER XC.

THE REIGN OF VICTORIA.

To the End of the Crimean War.

ON the death of William IV., who had no children by his marriage with the princess Adelaide of Saxe Meiningen, the crown, according to the Act of Settlement (p. 421) passed to the princess Victoria, the daughter of his brother, the Duke of Kent, who had died in 1820. Her reign has already lasted for nearly half a century, and it has been, throughout, for the whole kingdom a time of activity not to be paralleled in any earlier period of its history. It is crowded with events of the utmost importance; but we stand too near to many of them to be able to view them with real impartiality, and we must in many cases be content to form judgments which those who come after us may find it necessary to modify, or possibly to reverse.

Accession of Queen Victoria. 1837.


The times, on her accession, were such as to call for at least care and energy on the part of the rulers of the country; but Lord Melbourne, the prime minister of the first parliament of queen Victoria, as

Administration of Lord Melbourne. 1837.

he had been premier of the last parliament of Will III., was one to whom the policy of leaving this alone was the most congenial. There was a growing dissatisfaction with the working of the Corn Law which had been passed after the close of the struggle with Napoleon. The condition of persons employed in factories and mines, and especially the women and children working in them, was miserable; and the ignorance of the great body of the people could scarcely be exceeded.

The People's
Charter. 1839.

For these, and for many other evils, the remedy propounded by the most advanced or extreme leaders was the People's Charter, which insisted, on its six points, on universal suffrage, a division of the country into equal districts for the election of members of parliament, vote by ballot, annual parliaments, the removal of all property qualifications as a condition for election to parliament, and the payment of members for their services. Of these points two have been already carried. Votes in parliamentary elections are now given by bal



far the postage charged on letters had varied with the distance, and the rates charged were, according to our modern notions, exorbitant. The device of sending blank letters to be returned to the postman by the receiver, who thus knew that all was well with the sender, is said to have impressed Rowland Hill with the absurdity as well as the wrong of the existing system ; and the reduction of the postage to a uniform rate for the whole kingdom has made the post office (what it had never been before) a large source of benefit to the country.

The marriage of the queen in 1840, with her cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe Coburg, was an event which caused general satisfaction. It was the beginning of a wedded life of great happiness. But the comparative quiet of England itself stood out in contrast with the wars and rumours of wars which affected her interests or her supremacy in other parts of the world.

**Marriage of the
Queen. 1840.**

The main cause of these struggles seems to have been a fear of the consequences to be apprehended from the aggrandisement of Russia. In the first instance this fear appeared likely to lead to a contest, not with Russia, but with France. The Russian government was induced by Lord Palmerston to join with Austria, Prussia, and England in checking the victorious career of Mehemet Ali, governor of Egypt, who was supposed to be threatening Constantinople. The French government refused to join, and were left out of the treaty. A rupture was, in the end, avoided ; and Lord Palmerston vainly hoped that, delivered from the dread of his great enemy, Mehemet Ali, the sultan would do something towards lessening the monstrous iniquities which made the lives of his subjects an unbearable burden.

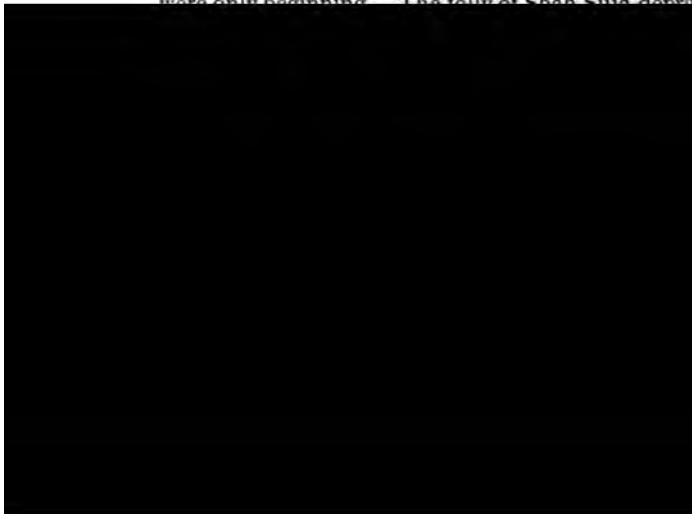
**The English
Government
and the Turk-
ish Sultan.**

War in Afghan-
istan. 1838.

But it was not for Constantinople only that fears of some English statesmen had been aroused. The Russian Czar was supposed to have his eye upon India, into which he might effect an entrance through Afghanistan. To prevent this, Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India, resolved to restore Shah Suja to the throne of Cabul, under the impression that in him the English would have an ally who would effectually bar the way against Russian aggression. The enterprise was strongly condemned by the Duke of Wellington and by all statesmen in India whose opinion should have carried weight. But Lord Auckland's mind was made up. The British army advanced from Quetta, and the capture of Ghazni (1839) was followed by an offer from Dost Mahommed to recognise Shah Suja as king, if himself were allowed to retain the post of Amir, prime minister.

Murder of Sir
Alexander
Burnes. 1841.

The offer was rejected, and Dost Mahommed fled (1839). But the dangers of the English at Cabul were only beginning. The fall of Shah Suja drove



subsequent defeat of Akbar Khan, the son of the Amir Dost Mahommed, and by the recovery of the English prisoners in his hands. Twenty thousand lives had been sacrificed on the English side, and £15,000,000 had been spent in the effort to secure a barrier against Russian inroads, without gaining an inch of ground, and at the further cost of stirring up in the breasts of all Afghans a deadly hatred of the English.

For the present the conflict was at an end; and the English prime minister, Sir Robert Peel, was able to turn his attention to matters closely affecting the welfare of the United Kingdom. He took office with the firm intention of maintaining the Corn Laws, although he was ready to lessen, so far as he could, the duties on foreign goods. He was struck by the fact that the lessening or remission of these duties was followed, in each case, by the increase of the revenue from other sources; but there were others who learnt the lesson more thoroughly, and had no scruple in pushing on to the conclusion that it is an economical blunder to keep up the price of food by legislative enactments—in other words, by artificial means.

**Sir Robert Peel
and the Corn
Laws.**

At the head of these stood Richard Cobden and John Bright, the chief promoters of the Anti-Corn-Law League (1836). It was natural that the doctrines of the Manchester school, as it was called, should be vehemently opposed; and it was opposed by not a few working men (on the supposition that the League was designed to divert their attention from the "People's Charter"), as well as by landowners and farmers, who dreaded the worst consequences to themselves. But Peel, who had resisted thus far, felt that he could carry resistance no further when the

**The Anti-Corn-
Law League.
1836.**

potato was smitten down by a disease, which seemed to be as mysterious as it was destructive.

Repeal of the
Corn Laws.
1846.

For the Irish people the potato had become main staple of food, and its failure meant general famine. The mortality which followed was appalling, and Peel saw that the Corn Laws must at once be swept away. Among his former adherents no few called him a deserter from the camp which was especially pledged to defend; and these banded themselves together under the title of Protectionists. But they were in a minority, for Peel was supported by the whole body of the Liberals; and the immediate repeal of the duties on grain completed the victory of the Anti-Corn-Law League (1846).

Revolution of
1848.

The year 1848 marked another stage in the progress of progress or of revolution. It began with revolutions in Paris, which drove the citizen king, Louis Philippe, from his throne; and the fire thus kindled spread with astonishing rapidity throughout Europe. The movement was one which aimed chiefly



son of the Louis whom the first Napoleon made king of Holland (p. 462). Before the close of the year Louis Napoleon had been elected President of the French Republic set up on the expulsion of Louis Philippe.

This singular man had started in life with the firm conviction that he was to play over again the part of his uncle, or at the least to prolong his dynasty. He had made attempts to overthrow the government of Louis Philippe, and he had undergone years of imprisonment after the failure of his enterprise. He had now, as the freely chosen magistrate of a republic, a fairer chance of success; and he worked patiently for the end which he had in view. He had no object in opposing himself to England; he had much to gain by bringing the English and French nations together, and he readily availed himself of the opportunity for so doing furnished by the Great Exhibition of 1851.


The high hopes raised by that wonderful display of all that belongs to the comfort and the elegance of life were destined to disappointment. An era of peace seemed to be dawning; but not many months more had passed before Louis Napoleon, under the pretext that the Republican leaders were preparing to attack him, resolved to be first in the field. The frightful massacre which accompanied his *coup d'état* (stroke of state) struck terror into the hearts of his opponents; and the proclamation of a new empire, under Louis Napoleon the Third, was sanctioned by a plebiscite, as it was called, of some millions of votes, which it was convenient to regard as the free expression of popular opinion.

Louis Napoleon was no great general, whatever be the judgment formed of his statesmanship; but, as

carrying out the Napoleonic tradition, he must do something for the honour and glory of the French nation ; and an opportunity seemed to be offered for so doing in the conditions under which the communities of Greek and Latin Christendom had access to the holy places at Jerusalem. The Czar of Russia insisted that the Greek or orthodox Christians were oppressed, and demanded from the Turkish sultan the right of protecting all Christians throughout his dominions. Such a concession would have made the Russian emperor as autocratic in the lands swayed by the sultan as he was in his own. The sultan declared war (1853), and his fleet was destroyed by the Russians.

o Crimean
War. 1854.

The fleets of England and France entered the Black Sea, and Louis Napoleon thought that he might now, without any deadly risk, win the glory needed to make him the idol of the French army. The war which he had done his best to promote was begun in 1854. The allied forces were landed first at Varna, where the successful defence of the Danubian prin-



was in its field operations marked by the terrible battles of Alma, Balaclava, and Inkermann.

The allied troops distinguished themselves by splendid bravery; but if the French commissariat, which provided for the food and comfort of the soldiers, was not what it should be, the English commissariat provoked condemnation far more severe. Reports came that the men were insufficiently fed, clothed, and sheltered; and cholera was added to the miseries, already dreadful, of exposure in the merciless Crimean winter. Storm after storm swept over the besiegers, and caused fearful havoc among transports and war-ships. But the horrors of war were mitigated by the unwearied devotion of the nurses who, under Florence Nightingale, gave themselves to the work of tending the sick and wounded in the hospitals of Scutari.

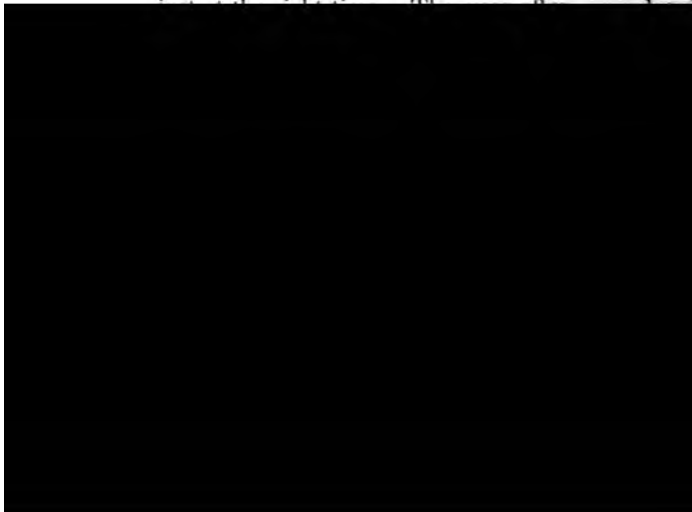
With the fall of Sebastopol in 1856, Louis Napoleon had gained his end. The death of the czar Nicholas had left his crown to his son, Alexander II., who was anxious to end the strife; and the French emperor announced that he meant to carry it no further. It is not easy to see what had been gained for England, beyond the hope, which might have been entertained without it, that the sultan would fulfil the solemn engagements binding him to administer true judgment among those whom he called his people. To look for such fulfilment would be scarcely less foolish than to look for a growth of roses on a granite rock.

CHAPTER XCI.

THE REIGN OF VICTORIA (*continued*).*The Indian Mutiny. England and Italy.*

Effects of the Russian War. If the Crimean war did England little good in Europe, it led possibly to not a little mischief elsewhere. It is not unlikely that her alliance with the sultan was represented in India as a result of vassalage which all the kings of the world owed to the Caliph of the Prophet. The sultan had now summoned England to aid him against his enemies, and England had obeyed the call. But her success had not been uninterruptedly brilliant; and there was reason to think that the struggle had exhausted her resources. To say the least, if there was to be a rising against her power, her British subjects in the east could not better opportunity. The opportunity came,

Agitation in India. 1856.



foreseen, and that so little should have been done in the way of guarding against, or preventing it, is one of the most astonishing features in the history of British India. But the disaffection which led to it was by no means confined to sepoys only.

The great disasters of the Afghan wars had much to do with it. Death at a distance from home was for Hindus a calamity the terrors of which it is impossible for us to realize. For those who fell among the hills of Afghanistan, no son could perform the funeral rites needed for the repose of the dead; and for the tremendous sacrifice so made they had received no recompense. Under the English standards they had fought in the terrible conflicts which had led to the annexation of the Punjab. In the battles of Moodkee, Ferozeshah, Aliwal, and Sobraon (1845-46), they had faced the most redoubted warriors of the Indian peninsula; nor had they done their duty less thoroughly in the concluding fights of Chilianwallah and Guzerat (1849); and for all this they had all received little more than for service on the banks of the Jumna or the Hugli.

To these causes of discontent were added others which appealed more directly to their fears and their superstitions. The English had for many years done mysterious things, and showed themselves possessed of mysterious powers which must have been kept in reserve for the conquest of Hindustan. What other purpose could there be for the poles and wires set up along the roads, which in some incomprehensible way revealed instantaneously to their rulers what was happening at a distance of hundreds of miles? The great Mogul sovereigns of India had never possessed ships which could move without oars or sails, and without heeding wind or current; nor

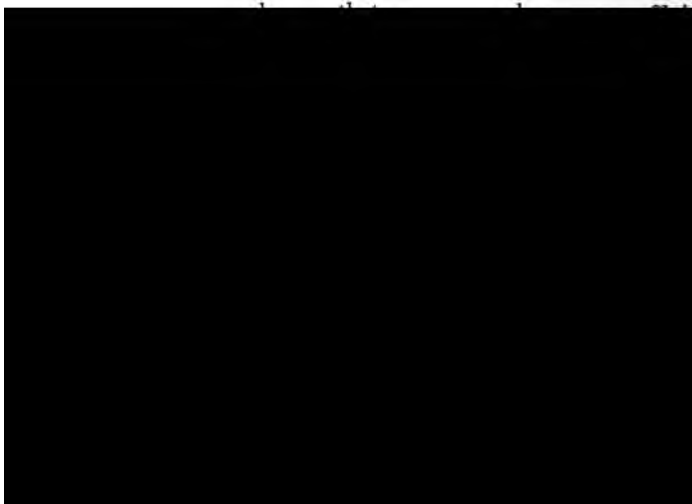
had they sent out chariots breathing flame along iron pathway. All these were devices for fastening the nations of India a yoke which they would never be able to shake off, a yoke which would compel them to give up their ancient customs, their caste, and their religion.

**The Greased
Cartridges.**

The whole country was, indeed, infected with fear which shut out all reason. The cartridges of Enfield rifles are in England greased with beef pork fat ; the order was unfortunately given at Calcutta that they were to be greased in like manner in India. But the pig is an abomination to Mahometans, the cow is sacred in the eyes of the Hindus.

**Misapprehen-
sions of the
Natives.**

No further proof could be needed, it was thought that the greased cartridges would be the means of making every one a Christian. At one of the military stations near Calcutta, a Lascar, it is said, asked a Brahman to let him drink out of his brass pot. The Brahman replied that he could not do so without defilement, and received the retort that he need not



met, men, women, and children. On reaching the native lines, the English troops found that the sepoys were gone. The mutineers had hurried off to Delhi, the imperial city of the great Mogul sovereigns; and before the sun was up they had crossed the river over which the road from Delhi to Meerut is carried.

At this time Delhi had no English troops. The sepoys joined the mutineers. Entrusted with the charge of the powder magazine, Lieutenant Willoughby placed a train leading to it, to be used if the need should come. The defenders held out as long as they could, and then the train was fired, and with the contents of the magazine some fifteen hundred rebels were blown into the air. But the heroism of Willoughby and his companions could make no change in the lot of the English then at Delhi. A few fled, many more were shot down, and those who became prisoners were afterwards massacred.

**The Mutineers
at Delhi.**

But the sepoys of Meerut had thrown down the gauntlet three weeks too soon. A simultaneous rising over the whole country had been fixed for the last day of May; and, had this plan been adhered to, the resistance of the English might have been paralysed. The truth is, that almost from the first the chief actors in the revolt began to pull in different directions. There was no master-mind to direct the mass.

**Want of Union
amongst the
Insurgents.**

The sepoys at Lukhnow rose at the time appointed (May 30); but, dismayed by the steady fire of the 630 English under Sir Henry Lawrence, they hurried off to Delhi. Early in June the native regiments rose at Cawnpore, and, by the orders of Nana Sahib, besieged Sir Hugh Wheeler and the English. For nineteen days the little garrison bore up under almost incredible sufferings; and then Nana Sahib promised to convey safely to Allahabad all who might lay

**The Massacre
at Cawnpore.
June 27, 1857.**

down their arms. Trusting to his professions of friendship, Sir Hugh Wheeler submitted ; but when the English were fairly in the boats a murderous fire was opened on them from both banks, and all four were shot down, murdered, or taken prisoners.

**The Second
Massacre un-
der the orders
of Nana Sahib.
July 15, 1857.**

In the hope of saving these victims of savage treachery, General Havelock was hastening up with a force of 2000 Europeans and Sikhs from Allahabad. Winning victory after victory on the road, he was distant only about eight miles from Cawnpore when the Nana ordered all his prisoners to be massacred. They were hacked and hewn almost from limb to limb, and in the morning the whole mangled mass of dead and dying together, was thrown into a well. A few hours later Havelock came up with the army of the Nana. The battle was fiercely contested, but Havelock had no cavalry, and could not follow in pursuit when the sepoys at last fled. On entering the city the traces of bloodshed carried them step by step to the well, where all was still in death. The well was now enclosed within a richly carved screen, and over

arrival of sepoys from regiments still tempted into rebellion by the comparative success of the revolt.

Whatever may have been the faults or the crimes St of these sepoys, they cannot be charged with cowardice. They delivered assault after assault on the English lines, and on June 23, the hundredth anniversary of the battle of Plassey, they attacked the British position with singular pertinacity, bravery, and skill; but in spite of all their efforts they failed, and they must have returned to the city with a gloomy conviction that in trusting the current prophecy (p. 490) they had been seeking support from a broken reed.

The work of the siege went steadily on, and the assault on the city took place on September 14. It was the fiercest struggle ever known in Indian warfare. Each day some advantage was gained, but only after severe fighting and with heavy losses. At length, on the 19th, the palace gates were forced; but the building was empty, the mutineers had fled. Two days later the old man who called himself the Great Mogul Emperor was found with his family in the tomb of Humayun (p. 437). He was brought to trial early in the following year, and condemned on all the charges. But his helplessness pleaded in mitigation of punishment. He had been an instrument rather than an agent in the mutiny, and the massacres had been the work of his wife, Zeenut Mahal. The sentence was banishment for life, and the last nominal sovereign of the once mighty Mogul dynasty died in Burmah.

The fall of Delhi was speedily followed by that of De Lukhnaw. Knowing that the delivering army under Havelock and Outram was near at hand, the mutineers poured a furious fire on the besieged English. But even when the garrison had been rescued the siege of the rebels went on for two months longer. In

November Sir Colin Campbell arrived with more effectual aid; but even then there was not force enough to recover the city, and the garrison with the women and children were transferred to Cawnpore. Havelock died on the march, the day after leaving Lukhnow.

Generalship of
Tantia Topi.

There were yet to be some strange alternations of success and defeat on both sides. The operations of this, the closing portion of the awful drama, were directed chiefly by Tantia Topi, the one general produced by this war on the side opposed to the English. This man might have been a rival of Moltke in the arrangement of a campaign; he failed because he lacked, not the military genius, but the personal bravery and audacity of Clive.

Reduction of
Lukhnow.
1858.

In March 1858, an army of 16,000 English troops, the largest number ever brought together in India, marched under Sir Colin Campbell (afterwards Lord Clyde) to the final attack of Lukhnow. Here, as at Delhi, the mutineers fought with astonishing resolution: and when they were driven at length out of the



of the hunted hare. Tantia was caught during sleep in a Malwah jungle. The subtle and consummate generalship of this remarkable man might make us regret that he could not be treated as a prisoner of war; but he had placed himself in the ranks of murderers by personally superintending the massacre of the English by the river-side at Cawnpore. From that time to the present Nana Sahib has never been seen or heard of; and there are not wanting those who believe that he is still awaiting an opportunity for renewing the strife. But there can be little doubt that he died or was murdered not long after the execution of Tantia Topi.

If the object which the British Government in India set before itself was the good of the people generally (and on the whole we cannot deny that this was their object), the mutiny was a woful breach in the orderly progress of their work. But, however beneficial the rule of the East India Company had been to the natives, the great rebellion of 1857 was regarded as furnishing conclusive proof that it ought to give place to the direct rule of the crown.


The Act of Parliament which ordered this change became law in August 1858, and in November of that year the people of British India were informed by parliament that they were now subjects of the British sovereign, who would respect all existing rights, and repress all attempts to interfere with their religion or their caste. Thus passed away the Company's *raj*, or rule; and in this sense only was fulfilled this prediction which had powerfully helped to bring about the rebellion; but it is absurd to suppose that this fact really represented the meaning of those who had circulated the prophecy.

In England, meanwhile, apart from the excitement

end. But there were questions of no little importance pressing on the attention of English statesmen at home. The pressure of burdensome commercial duties was felt more and more to be hindering the growth of national wealth, and adding greatly to the sufferings of the poor. A decided step in the way of improvement was gained by the Commercial Treaty with France, negotiated by Mr. Cobden, for the admission of French wares into England and of English manufactured goods into France on very low duties. The strengthening of common interests in trade would go far, it was thought, towards extinguishing the last embers of political animosity between the two nations.

CHAPTER XCII.

THE REIGN OF VICTORIA (*continued*).



slavery is always demanding a more extended area. Hence the American slave-owners sought with feverish earnestness to secure to themselves a preponderance in the Union, and for a long time they had succeeded in doing so.

But the limit of endurance for the Northern States was reached when the slaveholders made a formal demand for permission to introduce slavery into states in which thus far it was unknown, and at the same time required the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law throughout the whole Union. The election of Abraham Lincoln as President was the answer of the North to this demand (1860). The Southern States knew that they must either yield or withdraw from the Union.

The Fugitive
Slave Law.

They chose the latter alternative, and the Vice-President of the new Confederacy of the Southern States had the candour to confess that the war which must follow was not one for mere political ascendancy. Slavery, he said, was the great corner-stone which the builders of the American Union had rejected; but now it was become the headstone of the corner. On this issue the deadly struggle was fought out; and long before it was ended the 'peculiar institution' of the South was solemnly done away with.

The Southern
Confederacy

This awful conflict affected England in more ways than one. Among certain classes in this country there was a leaning, not altogether creditable to the countrymen of Wilberforce and Clarkson (pp. 433, 453), in favour of the Confederate States; and there were also those who cared little for the causes of quarrel on either side, so long as they might derive profit to themselves by the sale of war materials to the belligerents. The North had a strong navy; the Confederate States were in need of ships. English

The 'Alabama'
Controversy

ships were ready to build blockade-runners and privateers; and the English Government, it seems, were not ready to prevent them from being sent out of English ports to be employed against a people with whom we were at peace. One of these privateers was the *Alabama*; and the 'Alabama controversy, which was settled by the award of Geneva (1872), inflicted upon England a loss of about three millions sterling.

the Cotton
Famine in
Lancashire.
362.

But the factory hands of Lancashire depended for their livelihood on the supplies of cotton from the Southern States of the Union. These supplies were suddenly stopped; and, although the lack of them might ultimately be made up wholly or in part by cotton from India or other countries, the deficiency could not be met in a few weeks or months. Thousands were thrown out of all work for no fault of their own. But the utmost extremity of suffering never drew from them one word of regret for the policy of the Northern States, which blockaded the ports of the Confederates, or a single expression which implied the least excuse or palliation for the



determined the issue of the next controversy which might be raised on the subject of parliamentary reform.

The subject came up for debate immediately after the death of Lord Palmerston in 1865. From him it was useless to expect a reform; it was otherwise with Earl Russell, who, as Lord John Russell, had made the question his own for forty years, and who had played a prominent part in the carrying of the Reform Bill of 1832. But the bill which he now brought forward was rejected; and his appeal to the country was met by the returning of a parliament in which the Conservatives had a majority (1866). In the Ministry now formed Lord Derby was the Premier, Mr. Disraeli being the leader in the House of Commons. The anxiety for reform within the walls of parliament was perhaps not greater than it had been; but it soon became evident that the desire for it beyond its walls was vastly stronger and more general.

The mind of a large section of the people found expression in public meetings; and a great gathering was announced for Hyde Park. The Government tried to prevent the assembly; but the people broke down the railings and held their meeting, and it was afterwards ascertained that the attempt to shut them out was illegal. Mr. Disraeli was convinced, not by the show of violence, but from the firm and earnest language of the speakers, that the subject of reform was no longer to be paltered with. But even now the measure which he brought forward was rejected. In no way discomfited, he brought forward another, which was carried, and became law (Aug. 1867). This bill gave the franchise practically to all working men living in towns, and lowered it considerably for dwellers in the country.

^o Will of the
English People.

It has been said that the way to obtain the removal of great political abuses is to agitate, to agitate, to agitate. The doctrine has its dangers, and they very easily become serious dangers. But at no time in English history has the expression of the people's will been received with absolute contempt; and it would have been well for the country if the petitions of the working folk had met with greater consideration in the days of Richard II., and if the faith so solemnly pledged to them by that king had not been so grossly and treacherously violated (p. 278). Seed of this kind never fails to spring up; and if it be sown repeatedly, time must bring after it sooner or later the harvest of destruction.

^o Condition
of Ireland.

In Ireland the fatal work has been done again and again since the days of Strongbow and of Henry II. (p. 208); and the modern statesman can scarcely be blamed if his efforts for the removal of wrongs are not followed by the consequences for which he has been hoping. It was easy to inveigh against the aiders and abettors in the Fenian conspiracy of

they were called upon to support an ecclesiastical body with whom they had not the remotest sympathy.

Mr. Gladstone insisted that this, as a great injustice, should be redressed at once. Mr. Disraeli, who was now premier, opposed a determined resistance to the measure. The House was dissolved, and the new parliament carried Mr. Gladstone into power with a large majority (1868). The Irish Church Act was carried at once, and was speedily followed by an Irish Land Act, in which some attempt was made to deal with an astonishingly intricate subject, abounding seemingly in difficulties not even yet overcome.

**The Irish
Church and
Land Acts.
1868.**

These acts were but a small part of the work done by the new Government. Mr. Gladstone was, in fact, the head of a Ministry which for the first time embraced all the sections of the Liberal party; and important measures were carried with what, if the contrast was to be drawn from previous legislation, seemed breathless rapidity. A new system of national education enabled the inhabitants of any place where a school was needed to set up one for themselves, while aid was given from public money to the managers of denominational schools, on the condition that the education supplied in those schools came up to the standards required by the Committee of Privy Council for Education. By the adoption of the ballot secret voting was substituted in parliamentary elections for votes openly given (1872). It would be more worthy of Englishmen if all votes could be given openly; but it is always better to choose the less of two evils, if one is to be endured, and the monstrous tyranny and corruption fostered by the old system abundantly justified the change.

**Education and
the Ballot.**


The Gladstone Ministry was still busily employed in England, when the great drama of the second French

**The Franco-
German War.
1870.**

empire was played out on the Continent. The of the Third Napoleon, as he called himself, affected other countries as well as France. The candidature of a German prince for the crown of Spain was nominal, but in no way the real, cause of the which broke out with astounding suddenness between France and Prussia in the summer of 1870.

**The Causes of
the Struggle.**

There can be no question that the French emperor did all that he could to avoid the war; but he had always been more or less in a false position, and now borne down by sickness and anxiety, he was compelled by evil advisers to send to the Prussian sovereign defiance which he well knew to be fatally foolish. In so doing he gave to the Prussians, Count Bismarck and Count Moltke, precisely the opportunity which they had been longing for. The German army was in the highest state of strength and efficiency; the French army was to a large extent an army on paper, and the French war minister said what he knew to be false when he told his master that they were in every way ready for the field.



Weeks' War in 1866, which transferred the headship of Germany from Austria to Prussia. Rome alone remained, and the gates of Rome now stood open for the entrance of the army of Italy. Henceforth, from the ranges of the Lombardic and Piedmontese Alps to the southernmost point of Sicily, Italy formed one kingdom. Thus the events which made France a republic established a great power to the south of the Alps, and ended in the setting up of the German empire in the north.

In England the feeling was spreading that the Liberal Ministry was doing too much, that the nation was living too fast, and that a time of comparative inaction might be neither unacceptable nor unprofitable. Such, at least, seemed to be the verdict of the electors, who returned in 1874 a parliament in which Mr. Disraeli, now for the second time premier, had a very large majority. For six years he remained in power, and during the whole of this time the great idea underlying his policy seems to have been the winning for the British crown an imperial preponderance throughout the world.

British Imperialism.

Thus far England, he seems to have thought, had not carried sufficient weight. She must now take to herself the dignity which ought to be inseparable from her wide dominions. Not only must England be seen to be the equal of the German empire ; she must show herself everywhere, more especially, a match for the Russian czar. It was on the relations of England with the latter power that the effects of Mr. Disraeli's theories were to be first made manifest.

Relations of England with Russia.

The pledges exacted (p. 489) from the sultan after the Crimean War would, it was fancied, be followed by honest attempts on his part to redeem his promises. By Lord Palmerston, and some who thought with

Hopes of Turkish Improvement.

him, high hopes were formed of the wonderful progress which would place Turkey, as they called it, on a level with the most highly civilised nations of Europe.

Turkish Occupation in Europe.

There were others who denied that, in Europe at least, there was any Turkey, and who held that European soil so called was the soil, not of robbing and marauding Turk, but of the population whom he kept crushed under his iron heel; that Turk in Europe had never been anything more than a plunderer; that the lapse of four centuries left him as completely as he had ever been, an alien and intruder amongst a people with whom he had never coalesced; and that to look to him for reform, justice, or decency, was not less absurd than to expect the leopard to change his spots.

The Bulgarian Massacres. 1876.

For these Englishmen, although they might be horrified and disgusted, it was no matter for surprise when tidings were brought of massacres in Batak and other Bulgarian towns, perpetrated by Turks with deliberation of cruelty, and with a fiendish intention of exterminating which left their achievements in



sultan (1877). The progress of the Russian army was by no means one of uniform success. The passage of the Balkans was accompanied by tremendous suffering, and these miseries were followed by bloody battles and sieges, involving desperate labour and awful carnage.

But in the end the Turks were thoroughly overcome, and the Czar might, had he chosen to do so, have entered Constantinople as a conqueror. The terms of the treaty of San Stephano, which he imposed upon the sultan, were neither extravagant nor unduly severe; but they failed to win Mr. Disraeli's approval, and he insisted that they should be revised by a Congress of the Great Powers at Berlin, under threat of war if his demand should be refused (1878).

The country, indeed, was all but committed by its Government to a second struggle with the great empire of the north, when the informal parliament gathered in St. James's Hall, and other meetings throughout the country, made known the resolution of the people, that with a war so unrighteous they would have nothing to do. In the end the Russian government gave way so far as to accept a compromise, which insures the breaking out of the old troubles at some future, and probably no very distant, time. An arbitrary line was drawn, separating those who were to be set free from those who were to remain under the Turkish yoke; and more pledges were demanded and given, that the Christian subjects of the Turk should be as well treated as the Mahometan subjects of the queen of England.

Such in Europe were the effects of the vigorous foreign policy of Mr. Disraeli, who had now taken his seat in the Upper House as Lord Beaconsfield; and he felt encouraged by them to apply his theory

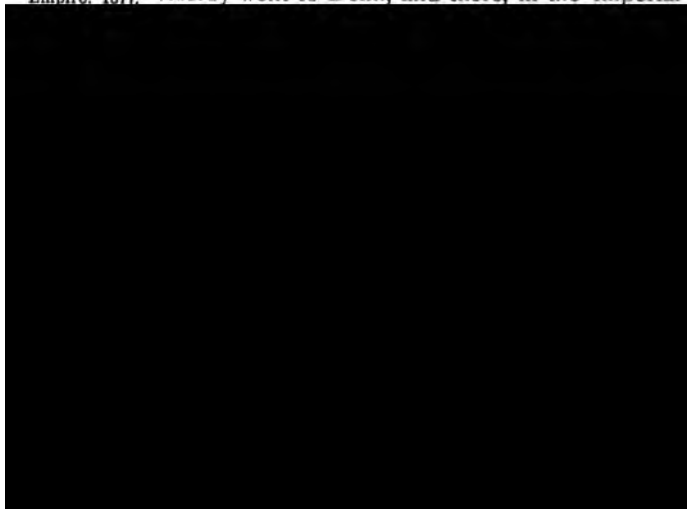
to the more remote east, by way of placing a check on Russian aggressiveness. The Asiatic continent should be made to see that the imperial splendour of England was not a whit behind that of Russia.

The Empire of India.

The English sovereign should henceforth be called Kaiser-i-Hind; in other words, the English queen should be empress of India, and the title, if asserted, would carry with it an irresistible charm for the natives of Hindustan and the turbulent marauders of Central Asia. It was to work more for the enemies and the subjects of Great Britain. India was from that day forth to be more peaceful, more prosperous, and more happy. The military expenditure, which was much too heavy, was to be reduced within limits which would involve little or no strain on the peasantry; and the Government would be enabled to devote its attention exclusively to the internal administration of the country.

Proclamation of the Indian Empire. 1877.

With such hopes and assurances as these the viceroy went to Delhi, and there, in the imperial



empire invulnerable. Unfortunately, within a few months, the British Government declared war against the Amir of Cabul. The conditions of the country were much what they had been at the time of the first Afghan war (p. 484). The English army reached Candahar, to find that it could advance no further. But a treaty was signed at Gandamak, which gave to the viceroy the power of sending a British envoy to Cabul. Sir Louis Cavagnari was sent accordingly, and he and his escort were all murdered, September 3, 1879. This great crime was punished by the sending of a British army, which retreated after it had done the terrible work with which it was charged.

Whatever view may be taken of the justice or the prudence of the war, the sanction of the English nation was never asked for it. The policy which led to it was never set before parliament; and, although the enterprise has added nothing to British territory, it has cost the lives of thousands on our side, of tens of thousands probably on the side of the Afghans. Towns have been sacked, and multitudes left houseless and homeless in the midst of a winter as severe as that of Norway; and all this has been done at a confessed outlay of thirty millions sterling.

At last, in the spring of 1880, Lord Beaconsfield dissolved parliament, and the decision was left in the hands of the British nation. Their answer was an unequivocal condemnation of the scheme from beginning to end. Nor was there any doubt that they regarded with grave disapproval the costly and useless struggle of the Zulu war in Southern Africa, although the true responsibility for this conflict lay with the parliament of the Cape Colony. The new Government, with Mr. Gladstone for the second time premier, took office under pledges to return to the

Results of the War.

The Parliament of 1880 and the Zulu War.

policy which had been abandoned in 1876, and carry out the measures needed for the internal well of the kingdom.

The Third Reform Bill, 1884.

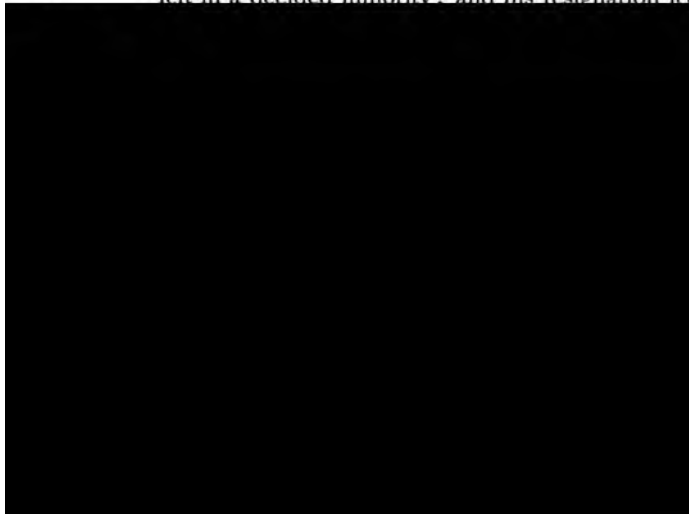
Among these measures was a third Reform (which became law in 1884), with a further bill the redistribution of seats. In other measures attempts were made to deal with the condition Ireland, and to remove all such causes of grievance may yet remain from the misgovernment of the past.

The Parliament of 1885.

The parliament elected in 1880 was dissolved 1885; and the new parliament was elected on understanding that any measures which might proposed for Ireland should not interfere with integrity of the United Kingdom. Becoming pre again, after a short tenure of power by a Conservative Government, Mr. Gladstone propounded a policy that country, which was regarded by many even his staunchest supporters as likely to bring about disruption of the empire.

The Parliament of 1886.

Again appealing to the country in 1886, he left in a decided minority; and his resignation led



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